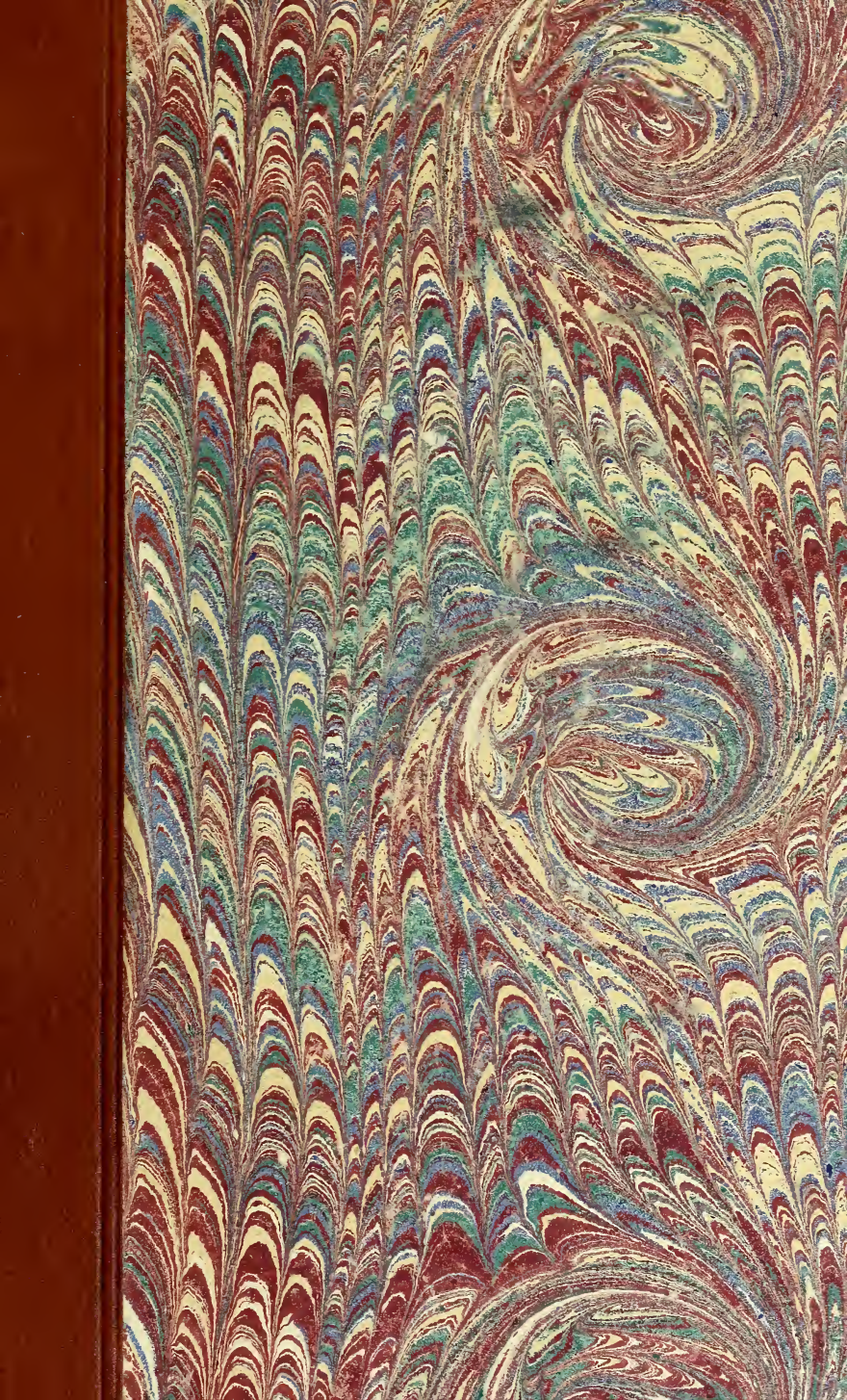

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39.1.4

John Gilbert Cooper – author of this work.
See D.N.B. Vol IV p 1070.
He married Miss Wright dau of Sir
Nathan Wright – apparently in 1743
Dr Johnson praised his Letters on Taste

by Gilbert Cooper

3914

LETTERS

CONCERNING

TASTE.

ΦΥΣΙΣ ἄμαχον ΕΡΩΤΑ ἐνέφυσεν ἡμῶν ταῖς ΨΥΧΑΙΣ παντὸς αἐι τῦ μεγάλε, καὶ ὡς προς ἡμᾶς ΔΑΙΜΟΝΙΩΤΕΡΟΥ.

Longin. de Subl. Sect. 35.

THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
Printed for R. and J. Dodsley in Pall-Mall.
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1755

The EDITOR's ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE following Obſervations upon TASTE were caſt into Letters, to take away, as much as poſſible, the formal Air of a didactic Performance. As it is no longer a Secret who is the Author, to prefix to this ſecond Edition the Advertiſement which came out with the firſt, would be as ridiculous as Sir *Martin Mar-all*'s pretending to play on the dumb Lute the in Sight of his Miſtreſs, ſome time

after the real Music had ceas'd which play'd behind him. The Editor therefore is now empower'd to declare, that the Author is determin'd neither to make material Alterations in any future Edition, nor to tire the Public with wire-drawing the Subject into a second Volume.

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LETTERS

CONCERNING

TASTE.

LETTER I.

To EUPHEMIUS.

WHENCE comes it, EUPHEMIUS, that you, who are *feelingly* alive to each fine Senſation that Beauty or Harmony gives the Soul, ſhould ſo often aſſert, contrary to what you daily experience, *that* TASTE *is govern'd by Caprice, and that* BEAUTY *is reducible to no Criterion?* I am afraid your Generoſity in this Inſtance is greater than your Sincerity, and that you are willing

ling to compliment the circle of your Friends, in giving up by this Conceſſion that envied Superiority you might claim over them, ſhould it be acknowledg'd that thoſe uncommon Emotions of Pleaſure, which ariſe in your Breaſt upon the Obſervation of moral or natural Elegance, were cauſed by a more ready and intimate Perception of that univerſal TRUTH, which the all-perfect CREATOR of this harmonious Syſtem ordain'd to be the VENUS of every Object, whether in the Material World; in the imitative Arts; or in living Characters and Manners. How irreconcileable are your Doctrines to the Example you afford us! However, ſince you preſs me to juſtify your Practice againſt your Declarations, by giving a Definition of what is meant by TASTE, I ſhall not avoid the invidious Office of pointing out your ſuperior Excellence to others, by proving that TRUTH and BEAUTY are coincident, and that the warmeſt Admirers of theſe CELESTIAL TWINS, have conſequently Souls more nearly allied

to

to ætherial Spirits of a higher Order. A *good* TASTE is that inſtantaneous Glow of Pleaſure which thrills thro' our whole Frame, and ſeizes upon the Applauſe of the Heart, before the intellectual Power, Reaſon, can deſcend from the Throne of the Mind to ratify it's Approbation, either when we receive into the Soul beautiful Images thro' the Organs of bodily Senſes; or the Decorum of an amiable Character thro' the Faculties of moral Perception; or when we recall, by the imitative Arts, both of 'em thro' the intermediate Power of the Imagination. Nor is this delightful and immediate Senſation to be excited in an undiſtemper'd Soul, but by a Chain of Truths, dependent upon one another till they terminate in the Source of all Perfection, the Divine ARCHITECT of the whole. Let us caſt our Eyes firſt upon the Objects of the Material World. A rural Proſpect upon the very firſt Glance yields a grateful Emotion in the Breaſt, when in a Variety of Scenes there ariſes from the whole ONE Order,

whoſe different Parts will be found, by the critical Eye of Contemplation, to relate mutually to one another, and each examin'd apart, to be productive of the Neceſſaries, the Conveniencies, and Emoluments of Life. Suppoſe you was to behold from an Eminence, thro' a ſmall range of Mountains cover'd with Woods, ſeveral little Streams guſhing out of Rocks, ſome gently tinkling over Pebbles; others tumbling from a Precipice, and a few gliding gently in Willow-ſhaded Rivulets thro' green Meadows, till their tributary Waters are all collected by ſome River God of a larger Urn; who at ſome few Miles diſtance is loſt in the Ocean, which heaves it's broad Boſom to the Sight, and ends the Proſpect with an immenſe Expanſe of Waters. Tell me, EUPHEMIUS, would not ſuch a Scene captivate the Heart even before the Intellectual Powers diſcover Minerals in the Mountains; future Navies in the Woods; Civil and Military Architecture in the Rocks; healing Qualities in the ſmaller Streams; Fertility,

that

that the larger Waters diſtribute along their ſerpentiſing Banks; Herbage for Cattle in the Meadows; and laſtly, the more eaſy Opportunities the River affords us to convey to other Climates the Superfluities of our own, for which the Ocean brings us back in Exchange what we ſtand in need of from theirs. Now to heighten this beautiful Landſcape, let us throw in Corn Fields, here and there a Country Seat, and, at proper Diſtances, ſmall Hamlets, together with Spires and Towers, as MILTON deſcribes 'em,

" boſom'd high in tufted Trees."

Does not an additional Rapture flow in from this Adjunct, of which Reaſon will afterwards diſcover the latent Cauſe in the ſame manner as before. Your favorite Architecture will not fail to afford leſs remarkable Inſtances, that Truth, Beauty, and Utility are inſeparable. You very well know that every Rule, Canon, and Proportion in building did not ariſe from the capricious Invention of Man, but from the unerring Dictates of Nature, and that

even what are now the ornamental Parts of an Edifice, originally were created by Neceſſity; and are ſtill diſpleaſing to the Sight, when they are diſobedient, if I may uſe that moral Expreſſion, to the Order, which Nature, whoſe Laws cannot be repealed, firſt gave to ſupply that Neceſſity. Here I appeal to your own Breaſt; and let me continue the Appeal by aſking you concerning another Science analogous to this, which is founded upon as invariable Principles: I mean the Science of living well, in which you are as happily learned as in the former. Say then, has not every amiable Character, with which you have been enamour'd, been prov'd by a cool Examination to contain a *beautiful* Proportion, in the Point it was placed in, relative to Society? And what is it that conſtitutes Moral Deformity, or what we call Vice, but the Diſproportion which any Agent occaſions, in the Fabric of Civil Community, by a Non-compliance to the general *Order* which ſhould prevail in it?

As

As the Arts of Painting, Sculpture, and Poetry are imitative of theſe, their Excellence, as ARISTOTLE obſerves, conſiſts in Faithfulneſs to their Original: nor have they any *primary* Beauty in themſelves, but derive their ſhadowy Exiſtence in a mimetic Tranſcript from Objects in the Material World, or from Paſſions, Characters, and Manners. Nevertheleſs that *internal Senſe* we call TASTE (which is a Herald for the whole human Syſtem, in it's three different Parts, the refin'd Faculties of Perception, the groſs Organs of Senſe, and the intermediate Powers of Imagination) has as quick a Feeling of this ſecondary Excellence of the Arts, as for the primary Graces; and ſeizes the Heart with Rapture long before the Senſes, and Reaſon in Conjunction, can *prove* this Beauty by collating the Imitations with their Originals.

If it ſhould be aſked *why* external Objects affect the human Breaſt in this Manner, I would anſwer, that the ALMIGHTY has in this, as well as in all his other

Works, out of his abundant Goodneſs and Love to his Creatures, ſo *attun'd* our Minds to Truth, that all Beauty from without ſhould make a reſponſive Harmony vibrate within. But ſhould any of thoſe more curious Gentlemen, who buſy themſelves with Enquiries into Matters, which the Deity, for Reaſons known only to himſelf, has plac'd above our limited Capacities, demand *how* he has ſo form'd us, I ſhould refer them, with proper Contempt, to their more aged Brethren, who may juſtly in Deriſion be ſtil'd *the Philoſophers of ultimate Cauſes*. To you, my dear Friend, whoſe truly philoſophical and religious Taſte concludes that whatever GOD ordains is right, it is ſufficient to have prov'd that *Truth* is the Cauſe of all *Beauty*, and that Truth flows from the Fountain of all Perfection, in whoſe unfathomable Depth finite Thought ſhould never venture with any other Intention than to wonder and adore. But I find I have been imperceptibly led on from Thought to Thought, not only to

treſpaſs

treſpaſs upon the common Stile of a Letter, by theſe abſtruſe Reaſonings and religious Concluſions, but upon the ordinary length of one likewiſe; therefore ſhall conclude by complimenting my own Taſte in Characters, when I aſſure you that I am,

Your moſt affectionate Friend, &c.

LETTER II.

To the Same.

IT gave me no ſmall Pleaſure to find, by your Anſwer to my laſt Letter, that you now allow BEAUTY to be the Daughter of TRUTH; and I in my turn will make a Conceſſion to you, by confeſſing that BEAUTY herſelf may have *acquir'd* Charms, but then they are altogether ſuch as are conſiſtent with her divine Extraction. What you obſerve is very true, that the human Form, (the moſt glorious Object, as you are pleas'd to call it, in the Creation) let it be made with the moſt accurate Symmetry and Proportion, may receive *additional* Charms from Education, and ſteal more ſubtily upon the Soul of the Beholder from ſome adventitious Circumſtances of eaſy Attitudes or Motion, and an undefineable Sweetneſs of Countenance, which an habitual Commerce with the more refin'd Part of Mankind ſuperadds to the Work of Nature. This the

antient

antient *Grecian* Artiſts would have repreſented mythologically in Painting by the GRACES crowning VENUS. We find how much LELY has availed himſelf in his ſhadowy Creations of tranſcribing from Life this adventitious Charm into all his Portraits. I mean, when he *ſtole* upon his *animated Canvas*, as POPE poetically expreſſes it,

"The ſleepy Eye that ſpoke the melting Soul."

You will aſk me perhaps how I can prove any Alliance in this particular Circumſtance of a ſingle Feature to Truth? Or rather triumphantly puſh the Argument farther and ſay, Is not this additional Charm, as you call it, inconſiſtent with the Divine Original of Beauty, ſince it deadens the fiery Luſtre of that penetrating Organ? I chuſe to draw my Anſwer from the Schools of the antient ETHOGRAPHI, who by their enchanting Art ſo happily convey'd, thro' the Sight, the Leſſons of Moral Philoſophy. Theſe Sages would have told you, that our Souls

are

are attun'd to one another, like the Strings of muſical Inſtruments, and that the Chord of one being ſtruck, the *Uniſon* of another, tho' untouch'd, will vibrate to it. The Paſſions therefore of the human Heart, expreſs'd either in the living Countenance or the mimetic Strokes of Art, will affect the Soul of the Beholder with a ſimilar and reſponſive Diſpoſition. What wonder then is it that Beauty, borrowing thus the Look of ſoftening Love, whoſe Power can lull the moſt watchful of the Senſes, ſhould caſt that ſweet *Nepenthe* upon our Hearts, and enchant our correſponding Thoughts to reſt in the Embraces of Deſire? Sure then I am, that you will always allow Love to be the Source and End of our Being, and conſequently conſiſtent with Truth. It is the Superaddition of ſuch Charms to Proportion, which is called *Taſte* in Muſick, Painting, Poetry, Sculpture, Gardening and Architecture. By which is generally meant that happy Aſſemblage which excites in our Minds, by Analogy, ſome pleaſurable Image.

Image. Thus, for Inſtance, even the Ruins of an old Caſtle properly diſpos'd, or the Simplicity of a rough-hewn Hermitage in a Rock, enliven a Proſpect, by recalling the Moral Images of *Valor* and *Wiſdom*; and I believe no Man will contend, that Valor exerted in the Defence of one's Country, or Wiſdom contemplating in Retirement for the Welfare of Mankind, are not truly amiable Images, belonging to the Divine Family of Truth. I think I have now reconcil'd our two favorite Opinions, by proving that theſe *additional* Charms, if they muſt be called ſo, have their Origin in Nature as much as Proportion itſelf.—I am very glad the Prints I ſent afforded you ſo much Pleaſure, not only as I wiſh every thing which comes from me may be favorably receiv'd by you, but as they are likewiſe a Confirmation of my Arguments; for the Man who drew them is no very great Artiſt, but being a faithful Diſciple of Nature, having delineated every Object in a *Camera Obſcura*, he has not fail'd of gaining

gaining the uncontested Applause, which the Followers of that unerring Mistress will ever receive from Mankind. My EUDOCIA calls me to administer with her Comfort to a little fatherless Family in the District of our Hamlet, therefore must conclude myself,

Your sincere Friend, &c.

LETTER III.

To the Same.

YOU have often heard me make true Conjectures concerning a Man's Taſte in Morals, from the Choice of his Pictures or the Diſpoſition of his Gardens. This you at firſt thought a little whimſical, till repeated Obſervation and Experience confirm'd, what I advanc'd in a former Letter to you, that the ſame *internal Senſe* taſtes for the three different Powers in human Nature; and from hence ariſes that Correſpondence betwixt the *Senſes*, *Imagination*, and *Underſtanding* of the ſame Perſon. I had once an Opportunity of obſerving, in ſome little Excurſions I made a few Years ago, from a celebrated Place in the North of ENGLAND, with a mix'd Company, how variouſly the different Places we ſaw affected every Man in onr Party according to the natural Turn of his Temper. We had among us an Inamorato,

Inamorato, much given to reading Romances, who dwelt with uncommon Rapture on a little rural Place call'd *H*——, where, it is ſaid, the famous Sir PHILIP SIDNEY compos'd his *Arcadia*. Here Enthuſiaſm ſeiz'd our romantic Lover, whilſt the reſt of our Company felt only the calm Senſation of Pleaſure. Nor was it long before it came in my turn to be not *touch'd* but *rapt*, and to *feel* that ætherial Glow of Admiration, at the Sight of a neighbouring Villa to SCARBOROUGH. You know I love the Comforts of domeſtic Life and the Charms of Contemplation in Retirement; and rather would enjoy the Heart-ennobling Tranſport which the Diſcovery of any thing beneficial to Mankind, or one charitable Action could give me, than the *ſuppos'd* Glories which all the Royal Robbers of the World ever plunder'd from their Species. From this Temper of Mind, mix'd with an Admiration of antient Manners and antient Mythology, you will not wonder that a Place, which anſwers in Miniature to

ÆLIAN'S

ÆLIAN's raviſhing Deſcription of TEMPE, ſhould thus warmly affect me. The Place I mean is called *E—— Lodge*. It is a ſmall convenient Houſe, built in the *Tuſcan* Order, at the foot of two little Hills, covered with Woods and flowering Shrubs, which for a conſiderable Way attend the ſerpentizing Courſe of a clear cool Rivulet; as if they meant to ſhade and protect with their Branches the Stream which runs in the Valley betwixt 'em. I could not refrain from burſting forth, in a kind of poetical Extacy, in the Words of our admired Poet,

" Where gliding thro' his Daughter's honor'd Shades,
" The ſmooth *Peneus* from his glaſſy Flood
" Reflects purpureal *Tempe*'s pleaſant Scene.
" Fair *Tempe*, Haunt belov'd of Sylvan Powers,
" Of Nymphs, and Fauns, where in the golden Age
" They play'd in ſecret on the ſhady Bank
" With ancient *Pan:* while round their choral Steps
" Young Hours and genial Gales with conſtant Hand,
" Show'r'd Odors, Bloſſoms, ſhow'r'd ambroſial Dews,
" And Spring's *Elyſian* Bloom. *

* *Akinſide*'s Pleaſures of Imagination, Book I.

Believe me, EUPHEMIUS, the ancient *Corybantes*, when they heard the ſacred Flutes in their religious Myſteries, could not feel or expreſs more Rapture than I did. Retroſpection had carried me on the Wings of Imagination two thouſand Years back, and had plac'd me in the delightful Regions of *Theſſaly* ‡. I know the ſympathizing

‡ I dare ſay the Reader will not be diſpleaſed to have ÆLIAN's Deſcription of ancient TEMPE, which the Author mentions above, laid before him in the elegant Tranſlation of that ingenious Gentleman, who favour'd the Public a few Years ago with *an Engliſh Commentary and Notes on* HORACE's *Epiſtle to Auguſtus, and a Diſcourſe on Poetical Imitation*. "The *Theſſalian* TEMPE is a Place, "ſituate between *Olympus* and *Oſſa*; which are Mountains of an exceeding great Height; and look, as if "they had once been joined, but were afterwards ſeparated from each other, by ſome God, for the ſake "of opening in the midſt that large Plain, which ſtretches "in Length to about five Miles, and in Breadth, a hundred "Paces, or, in ſome Parts more. Thro' the middle of "this Plain runs the *Peneus*, into which ſeveral leſſer Currents empty themſelves, and, by the Confluence of "their Waters, ſwell into a River of great Size. This "Vale is abundantly furniſh'd with all manner of *Arbors "and reſting Places*; not ſuch as the Arts of human Induſtry contrive, but with the Bounty of ſpontaneous "Nature; ambitious, as it were, to make a Shew of all "her Beauties, provided for the Supply of this fair Reſidence, in the very original Structure and Formation of "the Place. For there is plenty of Ivy ſhooting forth in "it, which flouriſhes and grows ſo thick, that, like the "generous and leafy Vine, it crawls up the trunks of "tall

ſympathizing Warmth of your Imagination, therefore ſhall leave you to fancy the reſt for me. However ſuch were my Expreſſions of Pleaſure upon the Occaſion, that ſeveral of our Company, who

" tall Trees, and twiſting it's Foliage round their Arms " and Branches, becomes almoſt incorporated with them. " The flowering *Smilax* alſo is there in great Abun- " dance; which running up the Acclivities of the Hills, " and ſpreading the cloſe Texture of it's Leaves and Ten- " drils on all Sides, perfectly covers and ſhades them; ſo " that no part of the bare Rock is ſeen; but the whole is " hung with the Verdure of a thick, interwoven Herb- " age, preſenting the moſt agreeable Spectacle to the " Eye. Along the level of the Plain, there are fre- " quent Tufts of Trees, and long continued Ranges " of arching Bowers, affording the moſt grateful Shel- " ter from the Heats of Summer; which are fur- " ther relieved by the frequent Streams of clear and " freſh Water, continually winding through it. The " Tradition goes that theſe Waters are peculiarly good for " Bathing, and have many other Medicinal Virtues. In " the Thickets and Buſhes of this Dale, are numberleſs " Singing Birds every where fluttering about, whoſe " Warblings take the Ear of Paſſengers, and cheat the " Labours of their Way through it. On the Banks of " the *Peneus*, on either Side, are diſperſed irregularly, " thoſe *reſting Places*, before ſpoken of; while the River " itſelf glides through the middle of the Lawn, with a " ſoft and quiet courſe; overhung with the Shades of " Trees, planted on it's Borders, whoſe intermingled " Branches keep off the Sun, and furniſh the Opportu- " nity of a cool and temperate Navigation upon it. The " Worſhip of the Gods, and the perpetual Fragrancy of " Sacrifices and burning Odors, further conſecrate the " Place, *&c.* [Var. Hiſt. lib. 3. cap. 1.]

had not an *Uniſon* of Soul, began to regard my Enthuſiaſm with a cool air of Deriſion. The next Day's Journey however afforded me an Opportunity of making Repriſals, and to pity many of our Party for the joyful Aſtoniſhment with which they were ſtruck by the aukward Magnificence of unmeaning Grandeur. You know *the* MANY among Mankind are affected only by *prodigious Actions* and *Deeds of* HEROISM in the Moral World, and, according to my Obſervation, have conſequently a correſpondent Reliſh for the Great and Wonderful in the Phyſical; ALEXANDER, CÆSAR, and PYRRHUS are their ador'd Images in the one; and *Caſtles*, *Mauſoleums*, *Pyramids*, Mountains, immenſe Plains, and Cataracts in the other. How natural then was it for thoſe who could paſs over the Paradiſe of our *Engliſh* TEMPE without Emotion, to gape their ſilent Wonder at *H— Caſtle!* I deſire you would minutely obſerve, the next time you take a mixed Company into your elegant Collection

of

of Pictures, and read their Characters by the choice of their Pieces. The Revengeful will find great Excellence in your APOLLO fleaing the unfortunate MARSYAS; the Man, who is subject to be discompos'd by violent Passions, will select out one of *Vandervelt*'s Storms to amuse himself with; and the Eyes of those, who are ennobled by filial Piety and the delightful Sympathy of Pity, will drop a Tear of Pleasure over your *Roman Charity*.—If the Weather will permit I propose to be with you at———next Month, but wherever I am, you will always be present with me. Adieu, my dear EUPHEMIUS, and do me the Justice to think, I am,

Your most sincere Friend, &c.

LETTER IV.

To the Same.

INDEED, EUPHEMIUS, the Compliments you are pleas'd to pay me upon the Obſervations I made in my laſt Letter to you concerning Analogy, would not fail to enflame my Vanity, did not I very well know that you view every thing, which comes from me, through the magnifying Medium of Friendſhip. This Reflection, 'tis true, leſſens the Satisfaction which would flow from a Conſciouſneſs of Merit, but at the ſame time augments my Happineſs another Way, by informing my Heart how deep an Intereſt I have in yours. You tell me that upon Recollection, you know of no living Artiſt whoſe Life does not greatly correſpond to his Performances; and that you have read of very few of the Dead, whoſe Works do not ſhadow forth, by this Analogy, the general Caſt of their Moral Con-

Conduct ‡. HOMER, we are told by the very ingenious and learned Author of his Life, had perſonally accompanied his Fancy wherever ſhe rov'd upon the Face of the Earth, and I make no Doubt ſuch was the reſtleſs Activity of his Soul, that he ardently wiſh'd to ſpurn this dull Globe, and ſoar to the Seats of his Immortals. To contraſt his Character, we need only caſt our Eyes on his poetical Diſciple VIRGIL, whoſe modeſt Majeſty in private Life bore ſo great a Reſemblance to all his Compoſitions. But Monſ. DE PILES, the ingenious Author of the Lives of the Painters, will furniſh us with ſome remarkable Examples to this Purpoſe. I dare ſay you have often obſerv'd, that ſeveral Pieces of MICHAEL ANGELO's, which you have ſeen in ITALY, tho' finiſh'd in a *grand gout*, and with a

‡ VOLTAIRE has the following remarkable Paſſage concerning the Character and Writings of the Cardinal *de Retz*. Cet homme ſingulier s'eſt peint lui-meme dans ſes memoires, ecrits avec un air de grandeur, une impétuoſité de genie, et une inegalité, qui ſont l'Image de ſa conduite. Dans le ſiecle de Louis XIV. vol. 1. p. 61.

vaſt Extent of Genius, want that Purity, Softneſs, and Elegance, which afford ſo much Pleaſure in the Works of ſeveral much inferior Painters. There is a Fierceneſs in the Looks, and a Wildneſs in the Attitudes of all his Figures, which, tho' they are indeed correct, and agreeable to Nature in ſome Moods, and cannot be condemned by the Judgment, are by no Means agreeable to the Eye; and tho' they fully ſatisfy the Underſtanding, never captivate the Heart.—You might obſerve at the ſame time, on the contrary, that RAPHAEL's, for want of the Uſe of the *Chiaro Oſcuro*, had not that Prominency, nor ſeem'd to come out from the Canvaſs ſo boldly as thoſe of his Rival; that he was rather deficient in Colouring, and preſerv'd too great a Sameneſs in the Drapery of all his Figures; yet nevertheleſs blending the Elegance of the Antique and the Simplicity of Nature together, and ſpreading that undefineable *Grace*, which was ſo bounteouſly beſtow'd upon him, over every Piece, he ſeizes at once upon the warm

warm Applauſe of the Heart by an irreſiſtible Force, and the Judgment fearfully ſuſpends the Exerciſe of her Faculties over the ſeeming Deficiencies at a diſtance, as if each Stroke was the immediate Inſpiration of Heaven, and there was nothing left for the human Mind to do, but to wonder and adore. Now if we look into the Lives of theſe two eminent Painters, we ſhall obſerve in them a correſponding Similarity to the different Defects and Excellencies in their reſpective Performances. The firſt, MICHAEL ANGELO, lived in the moſt recluſe manner, was ſtrict even to the greateſt Severity in his Morals, and gave himſelf entirely up to the Cultivation of the Arts he profeſs'd. Notwithſtanding, all his Actions were blameleſs, nay rather commendable, when examin'd only by the Rules of Moral Rectitude; yet wanting that Eaſe and gentle Deportment, which an habitual Intercourſe with Mankind imperceptibly gives us, he was ſo diſpleaſing in Converſation that he was avoided

avoided at laſt by every Acquaintance; and, whilſt RAPHAEL's Houſe was crowded with Friends and Diſciples, the World willingly left him to the Enjoyment of his belov'd Solitude. RAPHAEL, on the contrary, was a Man of the World, violently addicted by his Conſtitution to Pleaſure, but more particularly to the Love of Women, inſomuch that having, we are told, one Day abandon'd himſelf to the Enjoyment of ſeveral, he was taken ill of a burning Fever, and, concealing the Cauſe of his Diſtemper from the Phyſicians, he was carried off in the thirty-ſeventh Year of his Age, to the unſpeakable Grief of all who knew the Man, or admir'd the Artiſt. Notwithſtanding theſe human Infirmities, he poſſeſs'd ſuch a natural and acquir'd Sweetneſs of Temper, and Complacency in Behaviour, ſo Analogous || to that undefineable Grace in his Painting,

|| The dark gloomy Colouring we find in the Pieces of the *Baſſans*, aroſe from the Horror of their diſtemper'd Imaginations,

—— " That

Painting, that he was univerſally belov'd by all who knew him, and the ſevereſt Moraliſt was charm'd with his Converſation tho' he condemn'd his Conduct *. I cannot help obſerving in this place, and I hope it is not foreign to the Subject, that frequent Converſation with Women harmonizes the Souls of Men, and gives 'em that enchanting Grace, which has ſo often delighted us both in the Addreſs of ſeveral of our Acquaintance, not very eminent for their Virtues or Underſtanding. I am of Opinion, it was this conſtant Idea of Delicacy and Softneſs, collected

——— " That ſurly Spirit Melancholy
" Had bak'd their Blood and made it heavy thick."

Shakeſpear's K. *John*.

Therefore they made choice of ſuch Objects to paint, as were reſponſive to the internal Shade in their Minds, particularly Night-Pieces, where their Souls poured forth their unconſtrain'd Diſpoſitions upon the Canvaſs, and indulged in beloved Darkneſs. Whenever they were, againſt their Choice, employ'd upon other Subjects, the ſtrong Shades lower'd upon every Landſcape, and even the chearful Light of the Sun itſelf was greatly obſcur'd by Geniuſes which naturally delighted in his Abſence.

* In the two Characters of MICHAEL ANGELO, and RAPHAEL, this Obſervation of *Quintilian*'s was verify'd, In quibuſdam virtutes non habent gratiam, in quibuſdam vitia ipſa delectant. Lib. II. cap. 3.

lected from an habitual Intercourse with these fair Polishers of our Sex, and united into one complicated Form of Beauty, which, playing perpetually in the Soul of RAPHAEL, diffus'd itself thro' his Pencil over all his Works; and thro' his Looks, Deportment, and Tongue, over all his Words and Actions. Such, by the Appointment of Heaven, has ever been, and ever will be the Power of these amiable Creatures!——I have so much Vanity to think you will read the latter part of this Letter to AMELIA, that every one, who esteems you, may in a great measure hereafter seem to pay her a kind of an indirect Compliment. She has often told me, you know, that I am one of the loyalest Subjects the Sex ever had, and, I dare say, will not be displeas'd with this fresh Proclamation of their Dominion. You may add farther, that I think Women are the Fountains from whence flow the blended Streams of Taste and Pleasure, and that the Draught of Life is more or less sweet as they are mingled in the Cup. Adieu.

LET-

LETTER V.

To the Same.

YOU ſeem to think, EUPHEMIUS, that I contradicted in Converſation the other Day, in a great meaſure what I advanc'd in a former Letter to you, by allowing CRONOPHILUS to be a Man of a ſtrong Underſtanding and great Erudition, and yet at the ſame time aſſerting he had little or no *Taſte*. But according to my Obſervation, what I wrote, and what I ſaid, are very reconcileable. For *Taſte* does not *wholly* depend upon the natural Strength and acquir'd Improvement of the *Intellectual* Powers; nor *wholly* upon a fine Conſtruction of the *Organs* of the Body; nor *wholly* upon the intermediate Powers of the *Imagination*; but upon a Union of them all happily blended, without too great a Prevalency in either. Hence it falls out, that one Man may be a very great Reaſoner; another have the fineſt Genius for Poetry;

try; and a third be bleſs'd with the moſt delicate Organs of Senſe; and yet every one of theſe be deficient in that *internal* Senſation called *Taſte*. On the contrary, a fourth, in whoſe Frame indulgent Nature has twiſted his *triple Cord*, ſhall feel it conſtantly vibrate within, whenever the ſame *Uniſon* of Harmony is ſtruck from without; either in the original Works of Nature; in the mimetic Arts; or in Characters and Manners. That worthy Man, and amiable Writer, Mr. ADDISON, was no *great* Scholar; he was a very indifferent Critic, and a worſe Poet; yet from the happy Mixture, juſt mention'd, he was bleſs'd with a Taſte truly delicate and refin'd. This render'd him capable of diſtinguiſhing *what were* Beauties in the Works of others, tho' he could not account ſo well *why they were ſo*, for want of that deep Philoſophical Spirit which is requiſite in Works of Criticiſm. He likewiſe tranſlated the Poetical Deſcriptions of OVID very elegantly and faithfully into his own Language, tho'

he

he fell infinitely ſhort of 'em in his own original Compoſitions, for want of that *unconſtrain'd* Fire of Imagination which conſtitutes the true Poet. Hence we may be enabled to account for that peculiar Fatality which attends Mr. ADDISON's poetical Writings, that his Tranſlations ſeem Originals, whilſt his own Compoſitions have the confined Air of Tranſlations. Nor think I exemplify too far by obſerving, that your Friend POPE was a better Tranſlator than he was a Poet. Many Inſtances might be produc'd from his Tranſlation of the ILIAD to prove the Truth of this Aſſertion. One I will particularly mention, which is the ſublime Deſcription of NEPTUNE in the 13th Book.

" In *Samothracia* on a Mountain's Brow,
" Whoſe waving Woods o'er-hung the Deeps below,
" He ſate; and round him caſt his Azure Eyes
" Where *Ida*'s miſty Tops confus'dly riſe;
" Beneath fair *Ilion*'s glitt'ring Spires were ſeen;
" The crouded Ships, and ſable Seas between.
" There from the cryſtal Chambers of the Main
" Emerg'd he ſate; and mourn'd his *Argives* ſlain.

" At

" At Jove incens'd with Grief and Fury ſtung,
" Prone down the ſteepy Rock he pour'd along,
" Fierce as he paſs'd the lofty Mountains nod,
" The Foreſts ſhake, Earth trembled as he trod,
" And felt the Footſteps of th' immortal God."

I choſe to ſelect this Paſſage in Preference to any other, as the Original is a favorite one with Longinus, who had the moſt taſte of all the ancient Critics. In my Opinion the Tranſlation is not at all inferior to the Original. From which you may infer that I do not degrade Mr. Pope, tho' I ſay he is a better Tranſlator than he is a Poet.—I have this Morning read over the *Latin* Poem you ſent me, which gave me no ſmall Entertainment. The Author has ſhew'd his Taſte and command of the Stile of Lucretius, Horace, and Virgil, but more particularly of the former, all which he has elegantly blended, or, as his Subject occaſionally requir'd, us'd ſeparately. I thank you likewiſe for the two Tranſlations of the ſame Poem, tho' I muſt confeſs they did not give me equal Satisfaction,

tion, if any at all. If the two Gentlemen, who have charitably undertaken to *do* it into Engliſh, for the Benefit of thoſe who don't underſtand the Original, had poſſeſs'd *Taſte* or even common Judgment enough, to have diſtinguiſh'd that the chief Merit of that Poem conſiſts in the Language of it, they would have ſpent their Time much better by a more proper Application of their reſpective Talents, which have deſervedly rais'd both their Characters, not only in their different Profeſſions, but in the World of Letters. Mr. ——— writes me word he has a Letter by him from Count MAFFEI concerning VOLTAIRE's, and HILL's MEROPE, which I want much to ſee. When you write next pray tell me whether the little Group of Figures, I invented for you, is yet executed in baſſo relievo by our favourite Artiſt GOSSET. Adieu.

LETTER VI.

To the Same.

I Find, EUPHEMIUS, you don't thoroughly concur with me in a Remark I made in my laſt Letter, that "ADDISON "was an indifferent Critic, and a worſe "Poet." But however extenſive my Regard to the Memory of that great and good Man may be, and however inimitable and certainly *juſtly* admir'd he ever will be as a Proſe Writer, for thoſe moral and humourous Eſſays, but more particularly thoſe delightful Allegories his Muſe CLIO has left us; yet true Criticiſm will never allow him to be at the Head even of the ſecond Claſs of our *Engliſh* Poets. You anſwer that there are ſeveral Paſſages in ſome of his Poetical Compoſitions, which breathe a Spirit of Genius equal to any thing extant, either among the Moderns or Ancients; and at the ſame time, point out the famous Simile of the Angel

of Deſtruction, if I may ſo call it, in the *Campaign*; and another at the Concluſion of the firſt Act of *Cato*. Now tho' ſelecting *particular* Paſſages from a Poet is not a certain Method, nor a fair one, of forming a proper Eſtimate of his *general* Excellence, yet as you ſo ſtrongly urge theſe two, with an Air of Triumph, to be the Inſpiration of *Caſtalian* Streams, I muſt deſire you to examine them with me critically Line by Line, and I dare ſay you'll own, that both betray a great Poverty of Imagination by an inſipid Repetition of one Thought in different Expreſſions. To begin then with the celebrated Simile in the *Campaign*, which, for half a Century, has been undiſtinguiſhingly admired.

" So when an Angel by Divine Command
" With *riſing Tempeſts ſhakes a guilty Land*,
" Such as of late o'er pale BRITANNIA paſt,
" Calm and ſerene *he guides the furious Blaſt*,
" And pleas'd th' ALMIGHTY's Orders to perform,
" *Rides in the Whirlwind and directs the Storm.*"

Now take the ſecond Line of each Couplet, and examine whether the Thought is

varied. Is not *ſhaking a guilty Land with a riſing Tempeſt*, and *directing the Storm*, and *guiding the furious Blaſt*, the ſame Action? Is not acting *by Divine Command*, in the firſt Verſe, and *performing the Almighty's Orders*, in the fifth, the ſame Thought likewiſe? MARCIA's Simile in CATO abounds ſtill more with this tireſome Tautology.

So the pure limpid Stream when foul with Stains
Of ruſhing Torrents, and deſcending Rains,
Works itſelf clear, and as it runs refines."

CATO, Act I.

Ruſhing Torrents, and *deſcending Rains*, *works itſelf clear*, and *as it runs refines*. But now having had the diſagreeable Office of denying, for the ſake of Truth, this excellent Man a Right to a Pretenſion of being a good Poet, Juſtice will exact, and my own Inclination lead me to take notice, that his Tranſlations of OVID are as faithful and ſpirited, and at the ſame time carry as much the free unfetter'd Air of Originals, as any other Tranſlations in the Engliſh Language. As I have particulariz'd

ticulariz'd his Defects as a Poet, give me leave to take the more pleaſurable Part now to point out Inſtances of his Capacity as a Tranſlator, which I will ſelect from the Stories of NARCISSUS and ECHO, in the third Book; and of SALMACIS and HERMAPHRODITUS, in the fourth Book of the METAMORPHOSIS. The following Deſcription receives the ſame additional Beauty from the Tranſlation, as the Youth's Image did from the ſurrounding Waters.

" Now all undreſt upon the Banks he ſtood,
" And clapt his Sides, and leapt into the Flood:
" His lovely Limbs the Silver Waves divide,
" His Limbs appear more lovely thro' the Tide,
" As Lillies ſhut within a cryſtal Caſe,
" Receive a gloſſy Luſtre from the Glaſs." †

SALM. & HERM. Book iv.

The following Paſſages likewiſe among many others receive the ſame Advantage.

† Ille, cavis velox applauſo corpore palmis,
Deſilit in latices: alternaque brachia ducens
In liquidis tranſlucet aquis: ut *eburnea* ſi quis
Signa tegat claro, *vel* candida lilia vitro.

METAM. Lib. iv.

" The Boy knew nought of Love, and touch'd with ſhame
" He ſtrove and bluſh'd, but ſtill the Bluſh became;
" In riſing Bluſhes ſtill freſh Beauties roſe;
" The ſunny Side of Fruit ſuch Bluſhes ſhews,
" And ſuch the Moon, when all her Silver White
" Turns in Eclipſes to a ruddy Light. ‡ Ibid.

" With eager Steps the Lycian Fields he croſt,
" And Fields that border on the Lycian Coaſt;
" A River here he view'd ſo lovely bright,
" It ſhew'd the Bottom in a fairer light,
" Nor kept a Sand conceal'd from human Sight;
" The Stream produc'd nor ſlimy Ooze nor Weeds,
" Nor miry Ruſhes, nor the ſpiky Reeds,
" But dealt enriching Moiſture all around,
" The fruitful Banks with chearful Verdure crown'd,
" And kept the Spring eternal on the Ground.*

Ibid.

" But oft would bathe her in the cryſtal tide:
Oft with a Comb her dewy Locks divide;

" Now

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‡ ——— ——— Pueri rubor ora notavit
Neſcia quid ſit amor: ſed et erubuiſſe decebat.
Hic color aprica pendentibus arbore pomis,
Aut ebori tincto eſt, aut ſub candore rubenti,
Cum fruſtra reſonant æra auxiliaria Lunæ. Ibid.

* Ille etiam Lycias urbes, Lyciæque propinquos
Caras adeſt. Vidit hic ſtagnum lucentis ad imum
Uſque ſolum lymphæ. Non illic Canna paluſtris,
Nec ſteriles ulvæ, nec acuta cuſpide junci.
Perſpicuus liquor eſt. Stagni tamen ultima vivo
Cæſpite cinguntur, ſemperque virentibus herbis.

Ibid.

" Now in the limpid Streams ſhe viewed her Face,
" And dreſt her Image in the floating Glaſs;
" On Beds of Leaves ſhe now repos'd her Limbs,
" Now gather'd Flowers that grew about her Streams;
" And then by Chance was gath'ring, as ſhe ſtood
" To view the Boy, and long'd for what ſhe view'd †.

Ibid.

Give me leave to tranſcribe two Paſſages from the Story of NARCISSUS, and I will refer you to the Whole for a more entire Satisfaction.

" But why ſhould I complain, I'm ſure he burns
" With equal Flames, and languiſhes by turns.
" Whene'er I ſtoop, he offers at a Kiſs,
" And when my Arms I ſtretch, he ſtretches his.
" His Eyes with pleaſure on my Face he keeps,
" He ſmiles my Smiles, and when I weep he weeps.
" Whene'er I ſpeak, his moving Lips appear
" To utter ſomething which I cannot hear ‡.

Story of Narciſ. Book iii.

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† Sed modo fonte ſuo formoſos perluit artus:
Sæpe Citoriaco deducit pectine crines;
Et quid ſe deceat ſpectatas conſulit undas.
Nunc perlucenti circumdata corpus amictu,
Mollibus aut foliis, aut mollibus incubat herbis.
Sæpe legit flores. Et tunc quoque forte legebat,
Cum puerum vidit: viſumque optavit habere,

Ibid.

‡ Spem mihi neſcio quam vultu promittis amico:
Cumque ego porrexi tibi brachia, porrigis ultro:

" And none of thoſe attractive Charms remain,
" To which the ſlighted ECHO ſu'd in vain.
" She ſaw him in his preſent Miſery,
" Whom ſpite of all her Wrongs ſhe griev'd to ſee.
" She anſwer'd ſadly to the Lover's Moan,
" Sigh'd back his Sighs, and anſwer'd Groan for Groan.
" Ah Youth! belov'd in vain, NARCISSUS cries,
" Ah Youth! belov'd in vain, the Nymph replies.
" Farewell, ſays he, the parting Sound ſcarce fell
" From his faint Lips, but ſhe reply'd, " Farewell.
" Then on th' unwholſome Earth he gaſping lies,
" Till Death ſhuts up thoſe ſelf-admiring Eyes,
" To the cold Shades his flitting Ghoſt retires,
" And in the Stygian Waves itſelf admires *.

Ibid. iii.

If

Cum riſi, arrides: lachrymas quoque ſæpe notavi
Me lachrymante tuas: nutu quoque ſigna remittis:
Et, quantum motu formoſi ſuſpicor oris,
Verba refers aures non pervenientia noſtras.

Metam. Lib. iii.

* Nec corpus remanet quondam quod amaverat Echo,
Quæ tamen ut vidit, quamvis irata memorque,
Indoluit: quotieſque puer miſerabilis, Eheu,
Dixerat: hæc reſonis iterabat vocibus Eheu.
Ultima vox ſolitam fuit hæc ſpectantis in undam,
Heu fruſtra dilecte puer! totidemque remiſit
Verba locus: dictoque vale, vale inquit et Echo.
Ille caput viridi feſſum ſubmiſit in herba.
Lumina nox claudit domini mirantia formam,

Ibid.

If the ingenious Author of the *Diſcourſe on Poetical Imitation*, had not made it plainly appear, that what is too frequently miſtaken for one Poet's Imitation of another, is only an unavoidable Similarity, that will always attend the Deſcription of the ſame thing drawn by two Geniuſes tho' living in two different Ages and Countries, (for Deſcriptions are nothing but Tranſcripts from Nature, and Nature is always the ſame) I ſhould have been ready to have pronounced EVE's Deſcription of viewing herſelf in the Fountain, in *Paradiſe Loſt*, to be borrowed by MILTON from the former of theſe two laſt Paſſages in OVID, which is exactly the ſame, and then concludes,

——————Pleas'd I ſoon return'd,
" Pleas'd it return'd as ſoon, with anſwering Looks
" Of Sympathy and Love: there I had fix'd
" Mine Eyes till now, and, *pin'd with VAIN Deſire*,
" Had not a Voice, *&c.*

MILTON's Par. Loſt. B. iv.

What would lead me too more ſtrongly to the Conjecture, is, the ſeeming Alluſion to the Story of *Narciſſus* in the Expreſſion,

preſſion, *pin'd with* VAIN *Deſire.*——For fear a Chain of Thoughts ſhould here lead me to ſay any thing diſreſpectful of that Work which Nature form with moſt taſte, Woman, I will abruptly conclude myſelf,

Your, &c. &c.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

To the Same.

I Remember, EUPHEMIUS, when we were reading over together LUCIAN's Dialogue concerning BEAUTY, you was uncommonly pleas'd with that Author for calling HOMER the moſt excellent of the Painters †. Which imply'd, by beſtowing this Expreſſion upon the Father of the Poets, that Poetry comprehended all the Powers of her Siſter Art. But I'm afraid it would be too bold in any Writer to call APELLES, or PROTOGENES, the moſt excellent of the Poets. For tho' no Painter can arrive at any Perfection without a poetical Genius, yet his Art comprehending only Part of the Powers of Poetry, there would not be ſufficient Authority for the mutual Appellation. There are Subjects indeed in common

† Αριστον των Γεγραφων Ομηρον. LUCIAN.

mon to Poets and Painters, but even in thoſe very Subjects, (not to mention others which are the Province only of the former) Poetry has ſeveral adventitious Aids which maintain her Superiority over the other Art. Many Objects, 'tis true, ſuch as the following Night-Pieces for Example, may be ſo deſcrib'd even by the greateſt Poets, that Painters of equal Genius might produce Pictures, betwixt which and them, the Palm of Glory would hang wav'ring. The firſt is MILTON's,

——————" The Moon
" Riſing in clouded Majeſty, at length
" Apparent Queen unveil'd her peerleſs Light,
" And o'er the Earth her Silver Mantle threw."
MILTON's Par. Loſt. B. iv.

The next is HOMER's, which EUSTATHIUS eſteem'd the moſt beautiful Night-Piece in Poetry.

Ως δ' οτ' εν ηεϱγνω, &c. ‡
Iliad. lib. viii. l. 551.

The

‡ Mr. Pope's Tranſlation of this Paſſage is, in my Opinion, ſuperior to the Original, which the ingenious Author of Sir *Tho. Fitzoſborne*'s Letters has remark'd before me. I muſt add one Obſervation, which is, that Mr. POPE has moſt happily digeſted a Line of Shakeſpear's,

" And

The reſt are SHAKESPEAR's.

——————" Yonder bleſſed Moon ——
" That tips with Silver all thoſe Fruit-tree Tops.
Romeo and Juliet.

Again,

" The Moon ſhines bright: in ſuch a Night as this,
" When the ſweet Wind did gently kiſs the Trees,
" And they did make no Noiſe.
Merch. of Ven.

Now tho', I confeſs, *theſe* beautiful Strokes of the three greateſt Poets the World ever produc'd, may be equall'd by Painting, yet I will prove that one adventitious Circumſtance *might* be thrown into ſuch a Landſcape by Poetry, as the utmoſt glow of Colours could never emulate. This too SHAKESPEAR has done by a metaphorical

---

" And *tips with Silver* all thoſe Fruit-tree Tops,"
into his Tranſlation in this moſt maſterly Manner,
" O'er all the Trees a yellower Verdure ſhed,
" And *tip with Silver* every Mountain's Head.
To this I would apply, as Mr. H—— does in general, the Story of DOMINICHINO's availing himſelf of AUG. CARRACCI's Picture.

metaphorical Expreſſion in one ſingle Line.

" How ſweet the Moon-light SLEEPS upon that Bank!"
Merch. of Ven.

That Verb [SLEEPS], taken from animal Life and transfer'd by the irreſiſtible Magic of Poetry, to the before lifeleſs Objects of the Creation, animates the whole Scene, and conveys an inſtantaneous Idea to the Imagination what a ſolemn Stillneſs is requir'd, when the *peerleſs Queen* of Night is, in the full Splendor of her Majeſty, thus lull'd to Repoſe. When I once urg'd this, to an enthuſiaſtical Admirer of the *Lombard* School of Painters, in favour of the Pre-eminence of Poetry over his beloved Art, he ingenuouſly confeſs'd it was beyond the Power of the Pencil to convey any Idea adequate to this; and the ingenious Reaſon he gave, why it was ſo, gave me no ſmall Satisfaction. Painting, ſaid he, paſſes gently thro' one of the Senſes, namely, that of Seeing, to the Imagination; but this adventitious

ventitious Beauty of SHAKESPEAR's ſeizes the Imagination at once, before we can reduce the Image to a ſenſible Object, which every *meer* Picture in Poetry ought for a Teſt of its Truth to be reduc'd to: However, added he, ſince we are upon the Subject of Night-Pieces, if you will hazard the Palm of Superiority upon a Subject where both theſe Arts have every Advantage in common; that is, if you will collate any Deſcription in Poetry which conveys only Objects to the Eyes without theſe additional Charms, I dare venture that rural Night Landſcape, where you ſee, pointing to a fine Picture, the Power of the Moon both upon the Land and Water, againſt the moſt labour'd Strokes of VIRGIL or MILTON, or the more enchanting Sketches of HOMER or SHAKESPEAR. I muſt own nothing could be more favourable for me than ſelecting, from his Collection, this very Piece, to put in Competition with theſe Geniuſes; as it did not neceſſitate me to ſeek for a Deſcription on any other Subject, SHAKE-

SPEAR

SPEAR having left us a ſhort one, but at the time the moſt elegantly picturesque of any I remember; which with a kind of anticipated Triumph I repeated.

" To-morrow Night, when *Phœbe* doth behold
" Her Silver Viſage in the watry Glaſs,
" Decking with liquid Pearl the bladed Graſs.
Midſummer Night's Dream.

I could perceive by the Looks of my Friend, when I had repeated the ſecond Line, that he thought his favorite Painter had equall'd SHAKESPEAR in the Repreſentation of the Reflection of the Moon in the Water, but, when I had compleated the Scene by the third Line,

" Decking with liquid Pearl the bladed Graſs,"

both his Heart, Eyes, and Tongue confeſs'd the Victory of our inimitable Poet. —You know, EUPHEMIUS, the Repreſentations of Nature in her *ſimple Retirements*, as I us'd to call a rural Evening, were my favorite Subjects; more eſpecially when the Artiſt had blended with the Truth of Imitation, that undefineable Delicacy of Taſte, to which even TRUTH herſelf

herſelf is often indebted for a more agreeable Admittance into the Heart. I will illuſtrate what I mean by Example. That ſuccinct Picture of the Setting Sun in the 8th Book of the *Iliad*,

Εν δ' επες' ωκεανω λαμπεσν φαος ηελιοιο
Ελκον νυκτα μελαιναν επι ζειδωρον αρουραν.
Lin. 485.

"Now deep in Ocean ſunk the Lamp of Light,
"Drawing behind the cloudy Veil of Night."
Pope's Tranſlation.

has very ſtrong Outlines, and commands the warmeſt Approbation of our *Judgment*, but being unadorn'd with other Circumſtances, and wanting Objects to enliven the Landſcape, the Applauſe ends with the Judgment, and never ſinks deep into the Heart. Whereas the following Scene, in Mr. COLLINS's Ode to the Evening, being animated by proper Allegorical Perſonages, and colour'd highly with incidental Expreſſion, warms the Breaſt with a ſympathetic Glow of retir'd Thoughtfulneſs.

" For when thy folding Star arising shews
" His paly Circlet, at his warning Lamp,
" The fragrant Hours and Elves,
" Who slept in Flow'rs the Day,
" And many a Nymph who wreaths her Brows with Sedge,
" And sheds the fresh'ning Dew, and lovelier still,
" The PENSIVE PLEASURES sweet
" Prepare thy shadowy Car." ‡

Perhaps you'll here turn a former Remark of my own upon me, and say with the tragic Poet,

" It bears a just Resemblance of thy Fortune,
" And suits the quiet Purpose of thy Soul."
Young's *Revenge*.

and tell me, as you once did upon a similar Occasion, that I'm oblig'd to Retirement for the Discovery of these humble Pleasures. Perhaps I am in some measure: but tho' Sorrows have better'd my Heart and render'd it more familiar with Nature

‡ See a Collection of Odes publish'd a few Years ago by Mr. *William Collins*, whose neglected Genius will hereafter be both an Honour and a Disgrace to our Nation.

ture than it might have been in the chearfuller Scenes of Life, yet you muſt confeſs, that, from our earlieſt Acquaintance, you always perceiv'd in me a *kindred* Spirit to the PENSIVE PLEASURES. Adieu, my dear Friend, and reſt aſſur'd, that, whether I ſpeculate only in the Shades of Obſcurity, or whether the purſuit of my not ill-grounded future Expectations, caſts me into the more noiſy Scenes of Action, I ſhall always remain with the greateſt Sincerity,

Your, &c. &c.

LETTER VIII.

To the Same.

DID AMELIA and ſeveral others of my Friends in Reality deſire, in Conjunction with you, that I would ſend you the little Eſſay, which I wrote ſeveral Years ago when I was very young, upon the *polite Arts*; or was it one of the good-natur'd Frauds of Friendſhip, to deceive me into the harmleſs Pleaſure of thinking ſuch a Trifle ſhould be in requeſt among thoſe, whoſe Eſteem I ſo highly value? Be it which it will, your Deſire ſhall command my Compliance in every reſpect, and I will therefore tranſcribe the whole from the periodical Miſcellaneous Collection in which it was publiſh'd.

§ Nothing is a greater Indication of Luxury, the Fore-runner of Poverty, than the

§ This little Eſſay was publiſhed in a periodical Paper which came out once a Fortnight in the Year 1746.

the Degeneracy of the polite Arts into uſeleſs Oſtentation. The Poets, Painters, and Sculptors have of late almoſt forgot what gave riſe to, and ought to be the end of their Labours. Thoſe noble Deſigns in which ATHENS gloried more than in all her Military Exploits, are now little regarded; and thoſe noble Servants of Virtue, the ARTS, which formerly gave Inſtruction not only to the young and unexperienc'd, but to the old and learned, are moſtly ſlighted, and often proſtituted to adorn Vice, and flatter human Vanity. But to lay aſide the Severity of the Moraliſt, and talk to the Profeſſors, of what, they will think, concerns 'em moſt. I am fully convinc'd that nothing would ſo much contribute to their Fame and Fortune, and to make 'em complete Maſters, as an Attachment to Virtue, and the Uſes of Life; and an Emulation to form their Deſigns from the Models of thoſe ancient Artiſts, whoſe Works have been deliver'd down to us with the greateſt Applauſe, and will be

to all Posterity, as long as Truth is esteem'd the Criterion of Perfection.

Suppose any one of the Geniuses of the present Age, whether Poet, Painter, or Statuary, instead of following the wild Lure of his own Imagination, or the Whims of modern Originals, should modestly content himself to make PRODICUS's Judgment of HERCULES in XENOPHON's *Memorabilia*; the *perfect Beauty* of LUCAN; or *the mythological Picture of Human Life* written by CEBES, the Subject of his Imitation; I dare answer for it he would presently excell his Brethren, and verify this Observation, that the most faithful Disciples of Nature are always the greatest Masters of Art. This Justice however I must do my Countrymen, to observe, that there are still several among us, who, in spite of publick Depravity, retain a virtuous Love for the Arts, and make *Use* the end of their Endeavours. A Friend of mine who is an Admirer of the three Pieces above-mentioned, took me to see a Collection of Pictures, which were most of 'em taken from

from the Deſigns of thoſe celebrated Writters. Among the reſt I was particularly pleas'd with four, which exceeded any modern Performances, I ever ſaw, in Contrivance and Execution. The Subjects were INFANCY, YOUTH, MANHOOD, and AGE, which were repreſented in the following manner. The principal Figure of the firſt Piece was a naked Child coming into a Wilderneſs, ſupported by INNOCENCE and WONDER. At the Entrance the FANCIES of various kinds ſtood ready to receive it, who were conducted, for the moſt part, by *Impoſture*, *Ignorance*, and *Error*; ſome few indeed by *Reaſon* and Truth. Thoſe, belonging to the former, were the Miniſters of *Miſery*; thoſe, to the latter, of *Happineſs*. Both Parties ſeem'd very deſirous to allure the *new Comer* to their reſpective Dwellings, and Doubt and Pleaſure were blended together in the Infant's Countenance.—The ſecond Piece was compoſed of a Group not unlike the firſt. A young Man was

repreſented walking in a beautiful Garden, where all the Trees in full Bloſſom were arrang'd in the moſt natural Manner; the *Loves*, the *Graces*, and *Pleaſures* were courting his Embrace, whoſe Careſſes he return'd with mutual Ardor. Beneath the Feet of theſe was a Serpent crawling out from under a Border of Flowers; and, at a little Diſtance from thence, three or four *Cupids* binding *Reaſon* in Chains. VENUS appear'd above, deſcending in a Chariot drawn by Doves, with her *Idalian* Son upon her Lap, and *Indolence* amidſt her Court of infant Vices lolling on a Couch below. —— MANHOOD, the Subject of the third Piece, was characteriz'd by a ſedate Perſon in a Vineyard at the time of Vintage. He was leaning in a thoughtful Poſture, againſt a large Olive-Tree, whoſe Fruit was falling round him. *Ambition* ſtood on one Side pointing to the Temple of *Glory*, and *Care* on the other Side, with a wrinkled Forehead, looking at *Neceſſity*. To theſe the *Arts*

and

and *Sciences* were offering their Aſſiſtance, and the *Laws* protecting them, with their written Tables in one hand, and the Sword of *Juſtice* in the other. But amidſt all this Group, the Figures that look'd the moſt amiable were *Friendſhip*, conjugal *Love*, and parental *Affection*. To give theſe the moſt heavenly Sweetneſs, the Painter had exerted his utmoſt Skill; and to theſe the principal Image ſeem'd moſt attentive, as if he regarded the reſt only as ſubſervient to them. —— The fourth Piece remains to be deſcrib'd. There was an old Man ſtanding in a leafleſs Grove with his unactive Arms folded together, as if he was fixed in the deepeſt Meditation. His Beard was long and white, and his Garments like thoſe worn by the *Athenian* Sages. *Reflection* and *Experience* came behind him, and their Offspring *Foreſight* and *Precaution* went before. *Reaſon*, the great Queen of the intellectual Train, appeared in a triumphal Car, with the *Paſſions* chain'd to the Wheels, and *Opinion* waiting on her Look:

at ſome Diſtance *Hope* and *Peace* were ready to conduct the Sage to the Temple of Death, who ſate upon a Throne with *Time*, (his Train of *Hours* and *Days* attending round), and ſeem'd to invite the approaching Gueſt with a friendly Smile of Salutation, and not to deter him with the Looks of Horror, in which the Guilty are accuſtom'd to paint him.——In theſe four Pictures, the Seaſons of Life, the *Paſſions*, &c. are moſt beautifully perſonified, and may ſerve as a Specimen of what was eſteem'd ingenious and beautiful among the Ancients.

But beſides theſe, I was not a little delighted with another ſingle Piece in the ſame Collection. It was the Wreck of a large Ship on a Rock; the Veſſel is ſuppos'd to have juſt bulg'd, the Mariners are all in the utmoſt Confuſion and Deſpair, and in the midſt of 'em upon the Deck ſtands a beautiful young Woman looking down upon the Waves below, where an old Man is expiring with a dead Infant in his Arms: the one is ſuppoſed

to

to be her Father, the other her Child: the lively Anguiſh, mix'd with the moſt tender Looks of parental and filial Love, which ſhe expreſſes, never fails to raiſe in the Spectator of this maſter-piece of Art, the moſt heart-ennobling Pity, and gives us a ſilent Leſſon of Duty and Affection.——Such Subjects as theſe ought to employ the Time of every Artiſt, where natural and moral Beauty would be again united as they were of old; for whenever a good Taſte prevails in the one, an inſeparable Connection will tranſfer it into the other; but as long as *Superſtition* uſes *Art* like a Magician's Wand, to delude the Multitude with her fairy Creations, and *Luxury* allures her to rebel againſt *Virtue*, the Productions muſt neceſſarily be monſtrous; diſguſt every undiſtempered Mind; and only ſuit that Incongruity from whence they ſprung of *Prieſtcraft* and *Licentiouſneſs*.

You ſee, EUPHEMIUS, how willing I am to oblige you, by hazarding to your nice Inſpection the firſt Sallies of a young, tho'

tho' well-meaning, Fancy. If the Eſſay gives AMELIA any Pleaſure, I dare ſay you'll very ſoon communicate it to me, as I am convinc'd, from repeated Favours of this kind, that you will never let any Opportunity eſcape of giving me even the leaſt Satisfaction; much leſs will you conceal from me what, you may very well know, will afford the greateſt. I am,

Your, &c. &c.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

To the Same.

I AM quite ſick, my dear Friend, of the ſplendid Impertinence, the unmeaning Glitter, the taſteleſs Profuſion, and monſtrous Enormities, which I have lately ſeen in a Summer's Ramble to ſome of the Villas which ſwarm in the Neighbourhood of our Metropolis. You would imagine that the Owners, having retain'd the horrid Chimæras of a fev'riſh Dream, had jumbled them together in a waking Frenzy. In one Place was a Houſe built from an aukward Delineation plunder'd from an old *Indian* Screen, and decorated with all the Monſters of *Aſia* and *Africa*, inhoſpitably grinning at Strangers over every Door, Window, and Chimney-Piece. In another, we found an old *Gothic* Building encruſted with Stucco, ſliced into *Grecian* Pilaſters, with gilded Capitals; ſuperbly lined with Paper disfigur'd all over with the fat Deities of CHINA, and

and the heterogeneous Animals that exiſt only in the aërial Regions of UTOPIA. Few, very few, did we meet with that bore any relation to Proportion, or the Conveniencies and natural Emoluments of Life. But in all theſe notable Diſtortions of Art, I perceiv'd the poor proſtituted Word TASTE, was conſtantly made uſe of to expreſs the abortive Conceptions of a diſtemper'd *Fancy*. From a curſory View of theſe motley Productions of modern Refinement, you would be led to think, that the new Gentry of the City, and their Leaders the well-dreſs'd Mob about St. *James*'s, were ſeiz'd, the very Moment they left the Town-Air, with a *Chineſe* Madneſs, and imagined a Deviation from *Truth* and *Nature* was an infallible Criterion of TASTE. But of all the ſplendid Impertinencies I ever ſaw, nothing ever excited in me ſo contemptuous an Indignation as MUCIO's Palace; and yet the ſilly Multitude pour forth in abundant Crowds from the adjacent City,

during

during the Summer Seaſon, on a particular Day of the Week, which the indulgent Owner ſets apart for that Purpoſe, to gaze with open-mouth'd Aſtoniſhment at the ſuperb Nothing of this unmeaning Structure. MUCIO's Palace ſtands about ſix Miles from LONDON, upon a dry barren Spot where GOD never intended Wood ſhould naturally grow or Water ſpring: MUCIO therefore made choice of this Spot, in Preference to any other, to ſhew the *admiring* Spectators, that Wealth could perform every thing in the Phyſical World, as his *wary* Anceſtors had found it would do in the Moral. So to ſupply what Nature in a profuſe Irregularity beſtows upon other Places, but had withheld from this, he planted, at an immenſe Expence, by Rule and Line, ſeveral *pretty* Walks of Elm Trees, ſo engagingly like one another, that, at the firſt Glance, you may know them all to be of the ſame Family; and obſerving that Water is more *naturally* collected into, and preſerv'd in

a Body,

a Body, in low Situations, MUCIO, whoſe chief Aim, it ſeems, was to *excel Nature*, moſt *artfully* catch'd upon an Eminence, in a round Baſon turn'd by a pair of Compaſſes, or more properly a large Rain-water Ciſtern of ten Acres, the impriſon'd Contributions of Winter Showers, to putrify by Stagnation in the Summer Seaſon. The Houſe itſelf, 'tis true, is built with good *Portland* Stone, before which is *ſtuck on* a Portico in the *Corinthian* Order. The Rooms within are large without Magnificence; numerous without Convenience; and fitted up with an oſtentatious Splendor, without the minuteſt Appearance of any one real Elegance. The Furniture is even diſguſtingly expenſive, and ornamented into uſeleſs Incumbrance. Several daub'd Copies of P. PININI's Ruins dangle over monſtrous Marble Chimney-Pieces, that look like Family Monuments in a Cathedral; and not a few ſhapeleſs naked *Pagan* Deities, *done* by modern Artiſts, ſprawl upon Canvaſs ſurrounded with

with gilt Frames, tack'd upon Hangings of Gold and Silver Tiſſue. In ſhort, the whole ſeems as if MUCIO had been ſuffer'd by Heaven, to ſquander away immenſe Treaſures in this moſt ridiculous manner, to give a ſilent Leſſon of Conſolation to every Spectator, how low ſoever his Lot is fallen in the vale of Life, that Nature and Propriety will make a thatch-covered Cottage uſeful, and an Ornament in the rural Landſcape round him, when this enormous Pile of Stones ſcarce afforded the taſteleſs Builder a dwelling Room, and will remain, even in Ruins, a Monument of Vanity and Dulneſs.——I am glad you have finiſhed to your Satisfaction, the *Palladian* Bridge, you was ſo buſy about when I was laſt with you at———. I have ſelected a very beautiful parcel of Spar for your Grotto, which I propoſe to ſend in a few Days. I am,

Your, &c. &c.

LETTER X.

To EUGENIO.

I Have ſent you according to my Promiſe, EUGENIO, that little Philoſophical Poem, I have ſo often recommended, written by Sir JOHN DAVIES, entitled, *The Original, Nature, and Immortality of the Soul.* Wherein you will find the ſecret Springs of Pleaſure and Pain, Love and Hatred, laid open to your Inſpection. The ingenious Author, after having deſcribed the *five Senſes* as the Inlets of all Objects to the Soul, and the Imagination as a *Senſe in common* betwixt them and the *intellectual Powers*, proceeds to explain in the following Stanzas whence the *Spirits* of *Senſe* [i. e. TASTE] ariſe, and how they influence the human Paſſions.

" But ſince the *Brain* does lodge the Pow'rs of Senſe,
" How comes it in the *Heart* thoſe Paſſions ſpring?
" The mutual Love, the kind Intelligence;
" 'Twixt *Heart* and *Brain* this Sympathy doth bring.

" From

" From the kind Heat which in the Heart doth reign,
" The *Spirits of Life* doth their beginning take,
" Thoſe *Spirits of Life* aſcending to the Brain
" When they come there the *Spirits of Senſe* do make.
" Theſe *Spirits of Senſe* in *Fantaſy*'s high Court,
" Judge of the Forms of Objects ill or well,
" And ſo they ſend a good or ill Report
" Down to the Heart where all *Affections* dwell.
" If the Report be *good* it cauſeth *Love*,
" And longing *Hope*, and well-aſſured *Joy*,
" If it be ill, then doth it Hatred move,
" And trembling *Fear*, and vexing *Griefs* annoy.

You will obſerve from hence that a true reliſh for Life as well as for natural Beauty, depends upon a right Management of our Fancies; for if Fancy preſents Objects in falſe Appearances to theſe *Spirits of Senſe*, the *Affections* will embrace Vice and Deformity with the Careſſes, which naturally belong to Virtue and Beauty. For this Reaſon the noble Author of the CHARACTERISTICS warns us, out of the Stoic School, againſt the Deluſions of a falſe Fancy, as the moſt important Con-

cern of our Being †. If you would see this Doctrine illustrated and adorned with the most genuine Flowers of Poetry, let me recommend you to the third Book of the *Pleasures of Imagination*, the most beautiful of all didactic Poems.——I find Ambition has drawn you, from the quiet Retirement I last left you in, to the busy buzz of Courts and Levees. I must ingenuously confess that the pursuit of Wealth and Honours I should *now* enjoy myself, for since the irreparable Loss of all domestic Comforts I sustained by the Death of my dear EUDOCIA, I have plac'd my chief Happiness in hopes of raising myself to the Character a long race of Ancestors have possessed before me; but for you, who still enjoy the more desireable Comforts of conjugal Love, to leave the enchanting Conversation of your fair accomplish'd Friend, for the dull jargon of Business, is an exchange infinitely to your Loss. If *Fancy* has dress'd up *domestic* HAPPINESS

† See Lord *Shaftesbury*'s Characteristics passim.

HAPPINESS in the Robes of Office, believe me ſhe plays the *Spirits of Senſe* very falſe, and let me warn you betimes, leſt your Fate ſhould be the ſame as that of a noble *Arabian* I have heard related. The Story is this. There dwelt at IZRA a young Nobleman named MIRAVAN, who was bleſſed with Health, Wit, Beauty, and a ſufficient Competency of the good Things of this World, which for ſome Years he enjoy'd with the moſt uninterrupted Satisfaction, till one Day walking among the Tombs of his Anceſtors, he obſerv'd upon one of them the following Inſcription almoſt eraſed by Time;

IN THIS TOMB IS A GREATER TREASURE THAN CROESUS EVER POSSESSED.

Inflamed immediately with the very luſt of Avarice, he cauſed the *pond'rous and marble Jaws* (as *Shakeſpear* calls them) of his Anceſtor's Sepulchre to be opened; when entering with rapt'rous Expectation of finding immenſe Treaſures, he was ſtruck

ſpeechleſs with Diſappointment to behold nothing but a heap of Bones, Duſt, and Putrefaction, with this Inſcription over it.

HERE WOULD HAVE DWELT ETERNAL REPOSE A TREASURE CROESUS NEVER POSSESSED WHICH THOU HAST DRIVEN HENCE BEING EXCITED BY AN INSATIABLE LOVE OF GOLD TO DISTURB THE SACRED REMAINS OF THY PROGENITORS. HAD NOT THY REASON BEEN DELUDED BY A FALSE FANCY SHE WOULD HAVE TOLD THEE THAT THE GRAVE CONTAINS NOTHING BUT DUST AND ASHES.

Adieu, my dear EUGENIO, and build no Expectations but upon the Rock of Certainty. I am,

Your, &c.

LETTER XI.

To EUPHEMIUS.

I Am greatly pleaſed, EUPHEMIUS, that you was of the ſame Opinion as myſelf, in a late Converſation, that nothing would vitiate a Man's *Taſte* for Poetry more, than frequently reading the *Italian* Poets. Their forced Alluſions, their tinſel *Concetti*, and perpetual Affectation of hunting for *prety* Thoughts indiſcriminately upon every Subject, are ſo many Deviations from good Writing, which degrade the Dignity of *Heroic*, and totally deſtroy the ſimplicity of *Paſtoral* Poeſy. Sir PHILIP SIDNEY's ARCADIA affords a ſufficient Example how much the fineſt Genius may be corrupted by a too familiar Intercourſe with thoſe exotic Triflers. I don't mean by this to extend my Cenſure to every Part of their poetical Compoſitions, as there are many

beautiful Paſſages in TASSO's JERUSALEM in one Species, and in his AMINTA in the other; in ARIOSTO's ORLANDO, and in GUARINI's PASTOR FIDO, which are worthy of the higheſt Commendations; much leſs would I recommend the *total* neglect of them, or ſnatch that Palm of Glory from their Heads, which they have juſtly merited, from being the Inventors of the *Dramatic Paſtoral*. Nevertheleſs I ſtill retain the Sentiments, I then advanced, that there were even in thoſe two celebrated Pieces, the AMINTA, and PASTOR FIDO, ſuch a taſteleſs Profuſion of that ſhining Stuff, which BOILEAU calls *Clinquant*, as muſt greatly diſguſt every Reader whoſe Fancy is properly chaſtened by that Parent of ſober Criticiſm, from whom the STAGYRITE drew every Precept, *unerring Nature*. The firſt Act of both is full of thoſe *pretty* Abſurdities; indeed GUARINI ſo faithfully copies his Predeceſſor, that LINCO utters DAFNE's Thoughts

Thoughts throughout, and almoſt too in the ſame Expreſſions. For Example,

Odi quel Uſcignuolo
Che va di ramo in ramo
Cantando, *Io amo, Io amo.*
Dafn. in Am. Act 1.

Quell' Augellin, che canta
Si dolcemente, e laſcivetto vola
Or da l' Abete al Faggio,
Ed or dal Faggio al Mirto,
S' aveſſe umano Spirto,
Direbbe, ardo d'amore, ardo d'amore.'
Linco in Paſtor Fido, Act 1.

La Biſcia laſcia il ſuo veleno, e corre
Cupida al ſuo Amatore:
Van le Tigri in amore:
Ama il Leon ſuperbo:
Dafne in Aminta, Act 1.

This laſt deſcription of TASSO's, of the force of Love in the Brute Creation, is indeed unaffectedly beautiful, but GUARINI, thinking

thinking it a plain and ſpiritleſs Obſervation, has *Italianiz'd* it to his own Fancy in the following manner.

> Mugge in mandra l'armento, et quei muggiti
> Sono amoroſi inviti.
> Rugge il Leone al boſco,
> Ne quel ruggito è d'ira,
> Coſi d'amor Soſpira.
>
> Paſtor Fido, Act 1.

This Lion (as THESEUS ſays of his Brother in SHAKESPEAR's *Midſummer Night's Dream) is a very gentle Beaſt, and of a good Conſcience.* But I cannot diſmiſs this Paſſage without noticing the Merit of the AMSTERDAM Editor of 1732, who founds this ingenious explanatory Note upon the poor Word *Coſi. nell iſteſſo modo* (ſays he) or forſe meglio: *quando fa Coſi*, cio è quando rugge. It may eaſily be conceiv'd how a luxuriant Fancy may in the Heat of poetic Rapture glow up into Nonſenſe; but how a Commentator can coolly explain it afterwards is beyond my Underſtanding to account for.

I ſhould be glad if ſome of thoſe Gentlemen, who are ſo *willing to believe* the Superiority of the *Italian* Poets over their own Countrymen, would collate FLETCHER's *Faithful Shepherdeſs*, and MILTON's *Comus*, with the abovementioned Pieces, and impartially conſider the full Merit of both. I dare ſay they would find this Branch of Laurel, which thoſe two great Men have ſo ſucceſsfully tranſplanted from ITALY, flouriſhes better in our own temperate Climate, than on the Banks of the TIBER. But, as the FAITHFUL SHEPHERDESS is more preciſely a dramatic paſtoral Poem than COMUS, and the firſt too that was attempted in our Language, I would reſt the Contention upon that alone. If they deſcend to particular Paſſages, the following may ſafely be put in Competition both for Taſte and Moral, with any they can produce from their favourite Authors. After the *Satyr* has left CLORIN, the Faithful Shepherdeſs,

deſs, ſhe breaks out into the following Soliloquy.

" All my Fears go with thee.
" What Greatneſs, or what private hidden Power
" Is there in me to draw Submiſſion
" From this rude Man or Beaſt? Sure I am mortal:
" The Daughter of a Shepherd, he was mortal:
" And ſhe that bore me mortal: prick my Hand
" And it will bleed; a Fever ſhakes me, and
" The ſelf-ſame wind that makes the young Lambs ſhrink
" Makes me a-cold: my Fear ſays I am mortal:
" Yet I have heard, my Mother told it me,
" And now I do believe it, if I keep
" My Virgin Flow'r uncropt, pure, chaſte, and fair,
" No Goblin, Wood-God, Fairy, Elf, or Fiend,
" Satyr, or other Pow'r that haunts the Grove,
" Shall hurt my Body, or by vain Illuſion,
" Draw me to wander after idle Fires;
" Or Voices calling me in dead of Night,
" To make me follow, and to tole me on
" Thro' Mire and ſtanding Pool, to find my Ruin:
" Elſe why ſhould this rough thing who never knew
" Manners nor ſmooth Humanity, whoſe heats
" Are rougher than himſelf, and more miſhapen,
" Thus mildly kneel to me? Sure there's a Pow'r
" In that great name of Virgin, that binds faſt
" All rude uncivil Bloods, all Appetites
" That break their Confines. Act 1.

PERIGOT's Declaration, of the Purity of his Love to AMORET, and the Chaſtity of his Intentions, is not with leſs Taſte deſcribed

deſcribed in the ſame Act, not forgetting how ingeniouſly the Poet has avail'd himſelf of the Prejudices imbib'd in Infancy concerning inviſible Powers.

" O do not wrong my honeſt ſimple Truth,
" Myſelf and my Affections are as pure
" As thoſe chaſte Flames that burn before the Shrine
" Of the chaſte DIAN: Only my Intent
" To draw you thither was to plight our Troths
" With interchange of mutual chaſte Embraces,
" And ceremonious tying of our Souls:
" For to that holy Wood is conſecrate
" A virtuous Well, about whoſe flow'ry Banks
" The nimble-footed Fairies dance their Rounds
" By the pale Moon-ſhine, dipping often times
" Their ſtolen Children, ſo to make 'em free
" From dying Fleſh, and dull Mortality;
" By this fair Fount hath many a Shepherd ſworn,
" And given away his Freedom, many a Troth
" Been plight, which neither Envy, nor old Time
" Could ever break, with many a chaſte Kiſs given
" In hope of coming Happineſs. Act 1.

And AMARILLIS's Deſcription of the *ſullen Shepherd*, his Dog, and his Flocks, is as elegant. When I here ſay *elegant*, I would not be underſtood to mean that the Objects deſcrib'd are ſo, I mean the Deſcription

Deſcription only; for Poetry, as well as Painting, being an Imitative Art, a Poet may ſhew as much Ingenuity and Taſte in the Deſcription of a Deſart, as in that of the moſt flowery Landſcape.

" There is a Shepherd dwells
" Down by the Moor, whoſe Life hath ever ſhewn
" More ſullen Diſcontent than SATURN's Brow,
" When he ſits frowning on the Births of Men:
" One that doth wear himſelf away in Loneneſs,
" And never joys, unleſs it be in breaking
" The holy plighted Troths of mutual Souls:
" One that luſts after every ſeveral Beauty,
" But yet was never known to love or like,
" Were the Face fairer and more full of Truth
" Than PHOEBE in her Fullneſs, or the Youth
" Of ſmooth LYÆUS; whoſe nigh-ſtarved Flocks
" Are always ſcabby, and infect all Sheep
" They feed withal, whoſe Lambs are ever laſt
" And die before their weaning, and whoſe Dog
" Looks like his Maſter, lean, and full of Scurf,
" Not caring for the Pipe or Whiſtle.

Act 1.

To dwell upon every Beauty in this Piece would be to tranſcribe the whole. I ſhall therefore only add, that all Men of Genius, ſince the Death of the great Author, have

have concurr'd in applauding this moſt excellent Performance. As I have ſo warmly ſpoken of this Play, give me Leave to recommend to you the additional Pleaſure, when you next read it, of peruſing the Notes of the laſt Editor Mr. SEWARD, who has made ſome happy Emendations in the Text, and very appoſitely illuſtrated his Author with ſeveral ſimilar Paſſages from HOMER, THEOCRITUS, VIRGIL, SPENSER, SHAKESPEAR and MILTON.——Notwithſtanding what I have ſaid concerning the *Italians*, I hope my Compliments won't be unacceptable to our ingenious Friend, whom we call PETRARCH, in his Retirement in the Vale of——, known among us by the Name of VALCLUSA, and his amiable, I may ſay, his enchanting LAURA. Adieu.

I am,

Your, &c. &c.

LETTER XII.

To PHILEMON.

I Have been ſeveral Days, my dear PHILEMON, feeding my Eyes with thoſe delicious Remains of ancient Architecture, the Ruins of PALMYRA, with which thoſe very ingenious Gentlemen Mr. DAWKINS and Mr. WOOD, who made a Voyage into ASIA on Purpoſe with the much to be lamented Mr. BOUVERIE, have ſo greatly entertain'd the Public. What a Bleſſing it is to Mankind in general, and Glory to the Country in particular they belong to, when ample Fortunes fall to the Lot of Men who have ſuch Taſte and benevolent Diſpoſitions! I am almoſt perſuaded that LONGINUS himſelf muſt have been the Architect of the Temple of the Sun. There is ſomething ſo ſublime in that View of the grand Entrance, and the noble Perſpective behind it; and ſo analogous to his capacious Conceptions of Great-

Greatneſs in poetical Compoſitions; that many a one, with a Fancy leſs warm than mine, join'd to a Temper ſomewhat more dogmatical, would pronounce it abſolutely to be the Work of that great Genius, and endeavour to ſupport his Opinion, like a modern Controverſialiſt, with a hundred notable Conjectures tack'd together with Shreads of ancient Hiſtory. I muſt own I was greatly ſurpriz'd that among this prodigious Heap of magnificent Ruins, there ſhould be found only four IONIC Pillars, and all the reſt ſhould be of the CORINTHIAN Order. The Deteſtation the PALMYRENES bore to the ROMANS might be a ſtrong Reaſon there ſhould be none of the TUSCAN; but why one GRECIAN Order ſhould be ſo little us'd, and the other totally neglected, ſeems not ſo eaſily to be accounted for, eſpecially too when the IONIC was more in uſe, thro' ASIA *Minor* and the neighbouring Countries to PALMYRA, than both the other two join'd together. 'Tis true indeed, the Simplicity of the

DORIC would have ill ſuited the magnificent Structures built in Honor of the greater Cœleſtial Gods, but might nevertheleſs with the utmoſt Propriety and Taſte have been applied in Temples of the inferior Deities, and more particularly too of thoſe who preſided over the Concerns of the innocent Shepherd and laborous Huſbandman. Here not only the plain ſubſtantial Column of the DORIC, the Canon of whoſe Order was aſcertain'd, not by the lofty Cedar, but by ſturdy Trees of a more common Growth, was the only *proper* Support for the Temple of PAN or SYLVANUS, but the Ornaments generally made uſe of in that Order were ſuch too as would be expected naturally in Buildings of that kind at the firſt Inſtitution of this rural Religion; namely, the Heads and Horns of Animals offer'd up in their Sacrifices. The want of this Species of Architecture makes me ſuſpect, that the Ruins which now remain were built at a Time when an unbounded Luxury had over-run the State,

State, and almoſt extinguiſh'd the natural Taſte for Truth and Propriety. The great Critic juſt mention'd, has a moſt beautiful Obſervation in his *Treatiſe upon the Sublime*, concerning the Effect which immoderate Wealth has both upon private Families and Nations, and the ſpeedy Progreſs it makes to obliterate in the human Soul, by the Luxury accompanying it, that noble and natural Regard for every Species of Virtue, which the benevolent Author of our Being has originally implanted in us. "I cannot conceive, "(ſays LONGINUS) how it can happen "otherwiſe, but that we, who are ſo "doatingly fond of immenſe Riches, or, to "ſpeak more juſtly, who idolize them, "ſhould receive into our Souls thoſe "Evils which are congenial with them. "For Profuſion very cloſely follows "Wealth, or, as we may ſay, accompa-"nies it; and the latter having open'd "the Gates both of Cities and private "Families, they enter in and dwell toge-"ther: where having ſettled for ſome

" time they make their Neſt (as the wiſe " obſerve) and preſently endeavouring to " propagate their Kind, they beget *Pride* " and *Luxury*, which are no ſpurious Iſ- " ſues, but their true and legitimate Off- " ſpring. Whoever permit theſe Children " of Wealth to come to Maturity within " them, they ſoon bring forth thoſe impla- " cable Tyrants in their Souls, *Contumely*, " *Injuſtice, and Impudence*"§. Now, Hiſtory will inform us, that in all Empires a ſimilar Depravity of Taſte for Arts and Sciences and natural Beauty, has ever attended a national Corruption of Morals. In the glorious and virtuous Part of the ROMAN Republic under the Conſuls, what admirable Edifices were erected for public Uſe, ſuch as Temples for the Worſhip of the Gods, Senate-Houſes, Granaries and Aquæducts! In the Sink of Vice under the Emperors, we hear of expenſive Mauſoleums, immenſe Circuſſes, ſplendid

§ Ου δη εχω λογιζομενος ευρειν ως οιον, &c. Longin. de Sublim. Page 248. Edit. *Pearce*.

did Amphitheatres, ſtately Columns dedicated to Monſters who diſgrac'd their Species, and many other taſteleſs Wonders built for the Gratification of human Vanity. From hence I am inclinable to think the Ruins now before us were erected in the Age immediately preceding, or in that of ZENOBIA herſelf; when the ſplendid CORINTHIAN only could ſatisfy the Luxury of the Times, which had eradicated that Taſte for Propriety as otherwiſe would have been occaſionally delighted with the milder Charms of the DORIC Order. Nevertheleſs conſidering a true Taſte for Architecture muſt have preceded this indiſcriminate Magnificence, and that many of theſe Buildings too are not only Inſtances of great Science, but likewiſe often applied with great Propriety (for Inſtance, among others, the great Temple) I could not help falling into the ſame kind of Reflection as SULPICIUS makes, in his Letter to CICERO §, on

§ The humane *Sulpicius* thus apoſtrophizes himſelf, after the Reflection. Hem! nos homunculi indignamur, ſi

ſeeing, in his Voyage from ASIA, the Ruins of ÆGINA, MEGARA, the PIRÆEUS, and CORINTH. *Shall ſuch inconſiderable Creatures as myſelf,* (ſaid I) *repine at any little private Loſs, when at one View I behold the aſtoniſhing Magnificence of ſo many hundred Families, and the vaſt public Structures of a mighty Kingdom, all in Ruins before me?*—Indeed, PHILEMON, I begin to be aſham'd that you ever heard me murmur!—I am now going with a Party of ſelect Friends of both Sexes to take a Tour of Pleaſure to ſeveral Seats in the North of ——*ſhire.* When I return, you may rely upon receiving free and impartial Obſervations upon what we ſee there, in the manner you delight in, when you deſire me to give you *my flow of Soul.* Adieu, my dear Friend, and continue

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ſi quis noſtrum interiit, aut occiſus eſt, quorum vita brevior eſſe debet, cum uno loco tot oppidum cadavera projecta jaceant? *Viſne tu te, Servi, cohibere, et meminiſſe, hominem te eſſe natum?* Epiſt. lib. 4. epiſt. 5.

continue to do me the Juſtice of thinking that my Heart always flows from my Tongue and Pen, eſpecially when I ſay how much I am,

Your, &c. &c.

LETTER XIII.

To LEONORA.

JOY to you, my dear LEONORA, upon the Accompliſhment of all your own Wiſhes, and thoſe of a Man who I believe is as dear to you as yourſelf; at leaſt of one whoſe Happineſs is neceſſary to conſtitute yours. You are now enter'd into that State from whence, as our great Poet ſays,

" Relations dear, and all the Charities
" Of Father, Son, and Brother, firſt were known. †

Give me leave therefore, as the tie of Blood betwixt us may in ſome meaſure authorize the Freedom, and the Friendſhip we have always had for each other ſtill more, to mix with the unfeign'd Joy of Congratulation, the unreſtrainable Tenderneſs of a Brother, and Concern of a Friend,

† Par. Loſt, Book the 4th.

Friend, in giving my Advice to you in this Scene of Happineſs. Nor think it any Reflection upon the ſtrength of your Heart, that I ſhould imagine I could any way contribute to your Felicity by Admonition, which is not concerning your Prudence, (for, to free you at once from any pain of that ſort, I really think it incapable of Improvement) but relating to the Obſervation of ſome inferior Excellencies, which with the generality of your Sex have paſt unregarded, but, give me leave to ſay, are as eſſentially neceſſary to preſerve a Huſband's *Deſires*, as the more reſpectable Duties of a Wife. 'Tis not enough that a Woman is a faithful domeſtic Friend, ſhe ſhould daily ſtudy to inveſt herſelf with a hundred little enchanting Graces, ſuitable to the Diſpoſition of the Man ſhe marries, if ſhe would ſtill retain thoſe unſpeakable Charms, conceived only by Lovers, with which ſhe originally captivated his Heart. This grand Secret, my daar Siſter, lies in this ſhort Precept,

Never

Never loſe the Miſtreſs in the Wife; a Text of Bullion Senſe, which an Eſſay Writer would wire-draw into twenty glittering Pages. But as my Deſign is, not to gain your Applauſe of my talent as a Writer, but to give a hint for the Promotion of your Happineſs; to ſay more will be unneceſſary, to ſay leſs would be unaffectionate. I know ſome of our Friends would rally me for laying ſo great a ſtreſs upon minute Embelliſhments of Mind and Body; but I would ſoon ſtop the Laughter of thoſe Gain-ſayers by the following Fable, the Truth of whoſe Moral is as old and certain as the Foundation of the World, tho' the Story is my own Invention. PSYCHE, a Virgin born in the Iſland of CYPRUS, grew enamour'd of CUPID the Son of VENUS. After making ſome unſucceſsful Attempts to inſpire the little God with a mutual Paſſion, ſhe retired from the World to vent her Complaints in melancholy Solitude. There dwelt not far from PAPHOS, the Metropolis of the Country, a Nymph called

TASTE,

TASTE, a Daughter of one of the GRACES, to whom the VIRTUES, ARTS, SCIENCES, and even the GODDESS of the Iſland herſelf often reſorted. For without the Aſſiſtance of ſome ſecret Charms ſhe beſtowed upon them, tho' they perhaps might ſometimes coldly ſatisfy the World, their Endeavours to *enchant* it were always ineffectual. Hither PSYCHE repaired, and having diſcovered the Cauſe of her Uneaſineſs, ſupplicated the Nymph in the moſt humble manner to relieve her Diſtreſſes. TASTE, who never refus'd to comply with the Petitions of her ſincere Votaries, heard the Virgin's Requeſt with Compaſſion, and having made up a Zone of the ſame Materials with which ſhe had formerly compoſed the Ceſtus of VENUS, gave it her with the following Injunctions. "Take, ſaid ſhe, my dear PSYCHE, this "magic Zone, and wear it perpetually "round you, from whoſe latent Folds "ſuch an unſpeakable Power ſhall be "added to your natural Charms, that the "diſdainful God of ſoft Deſires ſhall not

"only

" only be captivated with your Beauty,
" as ſoon as he ſees you, but ſhall be re-
" tained in a voluntary and pleaſurable
" Bondage as long as you preſerve this
" myſterious Pledge of my Affection.
" Take the ſtricteſt Care therefore of this
" ineſtimable Treaſure, for ſhould you
" thro' Neglect be ſo unfortunate to loſe
" it, CUPID has Wings and will make
" uſe of them to leave you." Let it be ſufficient to ſay, that PSYCHE bound the Zone round her Waiſt, and accordingly ſo far ſucceeded in her Wiſhes, that HYMEN in his Saffron Robe ſoon pronounced a happy Union betwixt her and the Son of VENUS. Days, Weeks, and Months paſſed on in uninterrupted circles of ſtill increaſing Raptures. If PSYCHE went into the Meadows and Groves to taſte the Tribute of the returning Spring, CUPID was ever ready to wanton before her, and fill her Lap with the choiceſt Flowers and Bloſſoms. If ſhe was inclinable in the heat of Summer to viſit

the

the Rivers and Fountains, his Image was conſtantly mixed with hers in the floating Mirror. PSYCHE began now to think her Zone uſeleſs, and a troubleſome Incumbrance; therefore being one Day fatigued with the uſual Sports of the Country, ſhe looſened the golden Studs with which it was faſtened round her Waiſt, and threw it diſdainfully into the paſſing River. Very few Days paſſed after this, before ſhe perceived a viſible Alteration in the Affections of her adored CUPID; his Eyes no longer languiſhed on hers with ineffable Deſire; his Ears ceaſed, as they were wont, to be raviſhed with the Muſic of her Tongue; and a civil Indifference ſoon ſucceeded to the heretofore glowing Language of Extacy. By degrees her Company grew every Day more and more diſpleaſing to him, till at length a total Diſguſt having ſeized his Fancy, he ſpread his roſy Wings in Air, and for ever left

the deteſted Habitation of his once beloved PSYCHE.

Pray deliver my Congratulations upon this happy Occaſion to ARISTUS yourſelf, and then I am ſure they will not fail of being acceptable.

I am,

Dear LEONORA,

With the greateſt Sincerity,

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER XIV.

To the Same.

IT gave me uncommon Pleaſure that my Fable of Admonition was ſo well received by you and ARISTUS. Indeed, LEONORA, I can never think my Time better ſpent, than when I am employed in the Promotion of Happineſs in a Heart, ſo capable of every virtuous and elegant Sentiment as your own. I muſt confeſs, I had an Intention of ſending you an Epithalamium on your Wedding Day, but when I began to expreſs myſelf with the tendereſt Concern, and moſt ardent Wiſhes for your Happineſs, I found the Muſes, who are habituated to Fiction, were ſo unpropitious to unpoetical Truth, that, at the Concluſion of two or three honeſt Stanzas, I was obliged to drop my Pen, and offer up, in the Room of it, a free Libation of the Tears of Joy to the God of Marriage. However, as it was not then in my Power to amuſe you with any

Poetry

Poetry of my own Compoſition, I ſhall now take the Liberty to ſend you without any Apology an old Song, wrote above a hundred Years ago, upon a ſimilar Occaſion, by the happy Bridegroom himſelf. And tho' this old Song has been ſo little heard of, and as yet introduced into no modern Collection, I dare venture to pronounce there is in it more genuine Poetry, eaſy Turn of Thought, Elegance of Diction, Delicacy of Sentiment, Tenderneſs of Heart, and natural Taſte for Happineſs, than in all the Compoſitions of this Sort, I ever read, in any Language. But as you and ARISTUS have the ſame way of thinking as this happy Bard, he'll preſently raiſe by Sympathy an Admirer in each of your Breaſts, and it is unneceſſary for me to beſpeak your Favour any farther.

A SONG

A SONG.

I.

AWAY, let nought to Love diſpleaſing,
My WINIFREDA, move thy Fear,
Let nought delay the heav'nly Bleſſing,
Nor ſqueamiſh Pride, nor gloomy Care.

II.

What tho' no Grants of Royal Donors
With pompous Titles grace our Blood,
We'll ſhine in more ſubſtantial Honours,
And to be noble we'll be good.

III.

What tho' from Fortune's laviſh Bounty
No mighty Treaſures we poſſeſs,
We'll find within our Pittance Plenty,
And be content without Exceſs.

IV.

Still ſhall each kind returning Seaſon,
Sufficient for our Wiſhes give,
For we will live a Life of Reaſon,
And that's the only Life to live.

V.

Our Name, whilſt Virtue thus we tender,
Shall ſweetly ſound where e'er 'tis ſpoke,
And all the Great Ones much ſhall wonder,
How they admire ſuch little Folk.

VI.

Thro' Youth and Age in Love excelling,
We'll hand in hand together tread,
Sweet ſmiling Peace ſhall crown our Dwelling,
And Babes, ſweet ſmiling Babes our Bed.

VII.

How ſhould I love the pretty Creatures,
Whilſt round my Knees they fondly clung,
To ſee 'em look their Mother's Features,
To hear 'em liſp their Mother's Tongue!

VIII.

And when with Envy Time tranſported
Shall think to rob us of our Joys,
You'll in your Girls again be courted,
And I go wooing in my Boys.

May all the Prophetic Feelings of future Joys contained in this Song fall to the Lot of you and yours! But above all, may ſweet ſmiling Peace ſpread her Olive Branches over your Door, and yourſelves thoſe other *Olive Branches* round your Table!——My Spirits have been very low of late, which I attribute to beholding frequently

quently ſome Objects of Diſtreſs about me. If therefore my Malady is owing either to corporeal or mental Sympathy, I don't know where I can find a ſurer Remedy than under the ſame Roof with you and ARISTUS. So you may expect a Patient very ſoon. I am,

Your, &c. &c.

LETTER XV.

To EUPHEMIUS.

I Have been as often enraged, EUPHEMIUS, as yourſelf, at the trite, dull, and falſe Obſervation, often made by the half-witted Pretenders to Learning, that we have no poetical Genius left among us. How far this *taſteleſs* Prejudice againſt our own Times, may tend to extinguiſh what we have, I know not; but certain I am, that, if this ſtupid Reverence for *whatever* was the Productions of our Anceſtors, and the more irrational † and indiſcri-

† This Failing is by no means totally peculiar to our preſent Age, (tho' perhaps now carried higher than it ever was in any other;) for HORACE makes the ſame Complaint of the *Romans* in his Time, in his Epiſtle to AUGUSTUS. The Poet after having ingeniouſly to his Patron ſhewed the Injury and Abſurdity of the Practice, cries out,

Indignor quicquam reprehendi, non quia craſſe
Compoſitum, illepideve putetur, ſed quia nuper.

If the Reader would ſee one of the moſt ingenious critical Performances ever publiſhed, I refer him to Mr. H——'s Notes and Commentary on this Epiſtle.

indiſcriminate neglect of our Contemporaries prevail, we ſhall be ſtigmatiſed by our more diſcerning Succeſſors as the leaden Sons of BOEOTIA were of old. For my Part, I am of opinion, that there is now living a Poet of the moſt genuine Genius this Kingdom ever produced, SHAKESPEAR alone excepted. By poetical Genius, I don't mean the meer talent of *making Verſes*, but that glorious Enthuſiaſm of Soul, that *fine Frenzy*, as SHAKESPEAR calls it, *rolling from Heaven to Earth, from Earth to Heaven*, which, like an able Magician, can bring every Object of the Creation in any Shape whatever before the Reader's Eyes. This alone is Poetry, aught elſe is a mechanical Art of putting Syllables harmoniouſly together. The Gentleman I mean is Doctor AKINSIDE, the worthy Author of the *Pleaſures of Imagination*, the moſt beautiful didactic Poem that ever adorned the Engliſh or any other Language. A Work in which the great Author has united VIRGIL's *Taſte*, MILTON's Colouring, and SHAKE-

SPEAR'S incidental Expreſſion, with a Warmth peculiar to himſelf, to paint the *fineſt* Features of the human Mind, and the moſt lovely Forms of true Religion and Morality. Beſides this Leader of the *Muſe*'s Train, we have others now living, who, in their reſpective Compoſitions, leave not only all our deceaſed Poets, and thoſe of FRANCE and ITALY far behind them, but even bear the Palm away from any of their Competitors of ancient ROME; and, as HOMER deſcribes in his Games the Steeds of DIOMEDES preſſing cloſe on the Chariot of EUMELUS,‡

("Cloſe on EUMELUS' Back they puff'd the Wind,
"And ſeem'd juſt mounting on his car behind,
"Full on his Neck he feels the ſultry Breeze,
"And hov'ring o'er their ſtretching ſhadow ſees)
POPE's Tranſl.

they breathe in the Race even on the Shoulders of their GRECIAN Maſters. I ſhould not heſitate a moment to prefer the *Elegy in a Country Church-Yard*, written by Mr. GRAY, of *Peter-Houſe* in *Cambridge*, to the beſt Performance, in that kind, of OVID,

‡ Iliad. Ψ.

OVID, TIBULLUS, or PROPERTIUS. Has HORACE any Moral Ode equal to Mr. NUGENT's *Ode to* MANKIND, or any deſcriptive one to Mr. COLLINS's *Ode to the* EVENING? Mr. Jos. WARTON's *Ode to* FANCY would not ſuffer by the ſame Compariſon. I ſhould pay Mr. MASON no Compliment to compare all the Excellencies in SENECA together to his elegant ELFRIDA; nor do I think I ſhould at all degrade the ATHENIAN Stage to ſay, that the Palm of *tragic* Glory hangs wav'ring betwixt the conjoined Merit of SOPHOCLES's PHILOCTETES and the † OEDIPUS *Coloneus*, and this modern Tragedy, did not SHAKESPEAR, like a Champion of old inſpired by all the Gods, ſtep majeſtically in to bear it away by ſupernatural Power from the utmoſt Force of *human* Abilities. I dare ſay his MONODY

† I hope private Friendſhip does not prepoſſeſs my Judgment in thinking our Language will be enrich'd, in a Year or two hence, by an elegant Tranſlation of SOPHOCLES, now preparing for the Public, by that worthy Man and ingenious Writer Mr. FRANKLIN, Profeſſor of Greek in the Univerſity of CAMBRIDGE.

on the Death of Mr. POPE, wherein he has imitated the Stile of four of our *Engliſh* Poets, has given you and every Man of true Taſte, more Pleaſure than the joined Efforts of all the Wits in the celebrated Court of LEO the Tenth †. There is another little Piece written by the ſame Author, which has no Rival in the Court of AUGUSTUS, entitled *an Ode to a Water Nymph.* Theſe Opinions you'll ſay, are very bold ones to give under my Hand; but as I think I can ſupport them by juſt Criticiſm, I ſhall not fear the miſplac'd Imputation of being *particular*, for I am ſure I ſhall not ſtand alone in my judgment. I dare ſay AMELIA will be pleaſed at my *warm* Defence of her favorite Poets, and pray tell

† Theſe Imitations of the ancient Roman Poets FAMIANUS STRADA has preſerved in his *Academical Proluſions*, where the Stiles of LUCAN, LUCRETIUS, CLAUDIAN, OVID, STATIUS, and VIRGIL, are imitated by JANUS PARRHASIUS, PETER BEMBO, BALTHASAR CASTILIONIUS, HERCULES STROZZA, JOVIANUS PONTANUS, and ANDREAS NAUGERIUS, as he latinizes their Names. Lib. 2. Proluſ. 6.

tell her I ſhall eſteem her Approbation equal to the Applauſe of the *French* Academy of Sciences, and would prefer to being a Member of that illuſtrious Society the pleaſure of ſubſcribing myſelf hers and

Yours, &c. &c.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

To PHILETHES.

FOND as I am, PHILETHES, of the Entertainment of the Theatre, believe me I have lately received an Addition to this favourite Pleaſure, and ſuch a one as you would have participated in very greatly with me. This was no leſs than a total Victory over that inveterate Prejudice of our old Acquaintance MILOTOS, who (like the old Debaucheé in GIL BLAS that thought the Works even of Nature daily decay'd) has ſo frequently maintain'd that the Faculties of Mankind are much inferior to what they were in the laſt Generation. The old Gentleman, you know, till this Winter, has not been in Town theſe twenty Years, and conſequently totally ignorant of the late Reſtoration of Nature in the Repreſentation of Tragedy. When I mention'd my deſire of waiting on him to the Play, he aſſented to my Propoſal with his uſual Chearfulneſs, but at the

ſame

ſame time ſpoke with wonderful Rapture of BETTERTON, POWELL and VERBRUGGEN, and ſeem'd to inſinuate that he ſhould neceſſarily triumph in the Superiority of his Contemporaries over the modern Heroes of the Buſkin. But judge what was my Satisfaction after the Play was over at his pleaſureable Diſappointment, when he ingenuouſly confeſs'd, that GARRICK was not only the beſt Actor he ever ſaw, but even exceeded the utmoſt Conceptions he had form'd of Theatrical Excellence. It has been a peculiar Misfortune in the Repreſentation of Modern Tragedy, that the Subjects of it, by being moſtly royal Perſonages, were remov'd by their Rank from the common Obſervation of Mankind; ſo that our firſt Players, being totally unacquainted with the Characters, perhaps notably imagin'd that Princes were of a ſuperior Species to their Subjects, and therefore as BAYS made his Spirits talk unintelligibly, they thought their imaginary Heroes (which they had as little Conception of,

as

as the *Rehearſal* Poet had of aërial Beings) ſhould mouth every Sentence inarticulately. The Generality of Audiences are no more converſant with the Originals than the Players themſelves; ſo they took this preternatural Way of ſpeaking as inſeparable from the Character of Majeſty, till by Degres, as PRIOR obſerves upon another Occaſion,

"Cuſtom confirm'd what Fancy had begun."

and the deep-ton'd Monotony became the ſolemn Manner of *ſpeaking* Tragedy. This was the Situation in which this great Genius found the Stage about fourteen Years ago, who, being bleſs'd with every internal and external Qualification for repreſenting human kind in all its Subordinations; having, on the one hand, a ſound Judgment, an elegant Taſte, a lively Fancy, with the moſt penetrating Diſcernment into the inmoſt Receſſes of the Heart; and, on the other, an expreſſive Countenance, an Eye full of Luſtre, a fine Ear, a moſt muſical and articulate Voice, with an uncommon Power to modulate it with

eaſe

eaſy to every Tranſition of Paſſion, he reſtor'd Nature to her loſt Empire upon the Stage, and taught us by the Conviction of our ſympathizing Souls, that Kings themſelves were *Men*, and *felt* like the reſt of their Species.—From a Line in HORACE's Epiſtle to AUGUSTUS, I am inclinable to think that ROSCIUS was among the ROMANS what GARRICK is amongſt us, and that QUIN likewiſe in Contradiſtinction may be conſider'd as the Modern ÆSOPUS.

Quæ *gravis* Æſopus, quæ *doctus* Roſcius egit.

In this place the Epithet *doctus*, contraſted to *gravis*, the deep Cadence of ÆSOP, means that ROSCIUS was *ſkilful* in the Tranſition of one Paſſion to another, and had a wonderful Happineſs in accommodating himſelf to a Variety of Characters in Tragedy; whereas ÆSOPUS was ſuited only, by his ſonorous full Voice and graver Action, to one particular Species of Characters. The Epithet *gravis*, applied to ÆSOPUS, has led the Commentators

tors into a Miſtake concerning the Talents of ROSCIUS: they imagine, becauſe the one is call'd the *deep-cadenc'd* Actor, that the other in Contradiſtinction muſt have been *only* an Actor of Comedies. Their Authority for ſuch a Suppoſition ſeems to be this Sentence of QUINCTILIAN. ROSCIUS *citatior*, ÆSOPUS *gravior*, *quod ille comœdias, hic tragœdias egit.* ‡ But QUINCTILIAN, conſidering the diſtance of Time he liv'd from theſe famous Players, might poſſibly know as little of the Matter as themſelves; but that they were both miſtaken in this Point may be collected from TULLY, who celebrates his inimitable Action as a Tragic Player in the third Book *De Oratore*, as he had occaſionally inſtanc'd him, in the preceding Books upon the ſame Subject, as the faultleſs Pattern for the Repreſentation of human Nature in its comic Moods. So excellent was this great Man in the Scenic Art, that his Name at length became, as we

‡ Lib. 11. cap. 3.

we learn from the ſame Author, the Proverbial Criterion of Perfection in every Art and Science, inſomuch that whoever grew remarkably eminent in any, was call'd the Roscius of his Profeſſion. *Itaque hoc jamdiu eſt conſecutus, ut, in quo quiſque artificio excelleret, is in ſuo genere Roſcius diceretur.* ‡ § Conſidering the Delight and Uſe that accrue to a rational Creature, from obſerving a natural Repreſentation of the Paſſions by which his own Species is perpetually agitated, and conſequently the Effect that a well-regulated Stage muſt have upon the Taſte of a whole Nation, I am pleas'd that both the *Roman* and *Engliſh* Roscius have been ſo highly applauded and eſteem'd in their reſpective Countries, and that the greateſt Men in both have not only been enchanted with 'em upon the Stage, but have taken Delight to rank 'em among their Friends in private Society. — I have much

‡ Cicer. de Orat. lib. 1.

much to ſay to you about ſome *Italian Buffoonery* they are exhibiting at one of our Theatres, but ſhall reſerve that till I have the Pleaſure of ſeeing you, which, I have the Satisfaction to hear, will be very ſoon.

I am, &c. &c.

LETTER XVII.

To EUGENIO.

GREAT is the Joy I feel, EUGENIO, that you ſo highly reliſh the Converſation of my Friend EUPHEMIUS, more eſpecially too as I was the fortunate Perſon who introduc'd you to each other, for which, I muſt inſiſt upon it, you are both of you greatly indebted to me. I think indeed EUPHEMIUS is bleſs'd with a Grace in Converſation, and a *Taſte* in Society, ſuperior to any Man with whom I ever had the Happineſs of being acquainted. There ariſes from the Vivacity of his Fancy, the Delicacy of his Sentiments, and the beautiful tho' unaffected Arrangement of his Words, deliver'd with a Freedom of Countenance and Sweetneſs of Voice, ſuch an inexpreſſible Charm as pleaſingly bewitches the Attention of

all who hear him. He can deſcant upon ſerious Affairs with the moſt becoming Air of Gravity and Conſideration, without the leaſt Mixture of Auſterity or Philoſophical Affectation; and in the more eaſy Hours of ſocial Pleaſure, he can raiſe innocent and inſtructive Mirth from the ſlighteſt Accident that happens, and convert the moſt common Subjects into a thouſand Turns of Wit and Humour. One would imagine that SHAKESPEAR had been acquainted intimately with ſuch a Man, when he drew in ſo lively a manner the Character of BIRON in his *Love's Labour's loſt*,

" ——— ——— A merrier Man,
" Within the Limits of becoming Mirth,
" I never ſpent an Hour's Talk withal.
" His Eye begets Occaſion for his Wit;
" For every Object that the one doth catch,
" The other turns to a Mirth-moving Jeſt,
" Which his fair Tongue (Conceit's Expoſitor)
" Delivers in ſuch *apt* and *gracious* Words,
" That aged Ears play Truant at his Tales,
" And younger Hearings are quite raviſhed;
" So ſweet and voluble is his Diſcourſe".

Act 1.

But

But his chief Excellence conſiſts in addreſſing the Fair, when I have heard flow from him, as HOMER phraſes it,

——ἑπεα νιφαδεσσιν ἐοικοτα χειμεριησιν.
Iliad. lib. Γ. lin. 222.

or, as Mr. POPE tranſlates it, [Words]

" Soft as the Fleeces of deſcending Snows,"

which beautiful Expreſſion DRYDEN has copied and greatly improv'd, when he applies it to the ſoft Subject I am ſpeaking of, making LEONORA, in his *Spaniſh Fryar*, deſcribe the Addreſſes of TORRISMOND in the following manner;

" But when he ſpoke what tender Words he ſaid,
" So ſoftly, that like Flakes of feather'd Snow
" They *melted* as they fell. Act 1.

This ſoftly Breathing the Fervor of one Soul into another, is an Art in which EUPHEMIUS is ſo happily ſkilled, that *Inſenſibility* herſelf, in the ſhape of a Woman, would almoſt loſe her Nature in hearing him, and perceive the pleaſing

Infection, would he attempt the Miracle. I have often obſerved, that this enchanting turn in Converſation prevails only in thoſe of our own Sex, who have converſed much with the more ſenſible Part of the other. OTWAY juſtly ſays,

" We had been Brutes without them;

for let a Man's Erudition be ever ſo profound, his Fancy lively, and Judgment ſolid, this Grace, which is not to be deſcribed, will be wanting, if his Soul has not been refined, and his Tongue attuned to this ſweet Melody by an habitual Intercourſe with theſe fair Preceptors.——We are told that VOITURE was as remarkably happy in Converſation as in his epiſtolary Writings. This muſt be attributed to his Intimacy with Madamoiſſelles PAULET and RAMBOUILLET, and the Counteſs DE SABLE, more than to the Advantage of being a Friend to the learned COSTAR. A Compariſon

of

of this Author's Letters with thoſe of his Rival BALSAC, plainly evinces the truth of this Obſervation. The eaſy Air, the happy Sprightlineſs, and elegant Turn of Expreſſion in the Compoſitions of the former, diſcover the Man of the World educated in Courts, and poliſh'd by that advantageous Colliſion with the brighteſt Part of our Species; whilſt laboured Language, and an Affectation in Sentiment, inform us frequently, without the help of Hiſtory, that the other led the life of a Recluſe in the Country. Hence it appears from the different Productions of two Geniuſes of equal *natural* Talents, that more Taſte and Elegance in Writing is to be acquired in a circle of Beauties at PARIS, than in a *learned* Society of Capuchins in a Convent at ANGOULEME. ——— Pray tell the Ladies at——— that I am now more deſirous than ever to get a corner in your Heart, as I would have every Place open to me where

they enter; eſpecially where they *reign* with ſuch unlimited Power. This you owe me; for you can never make more room for me there, than you will find for yourſelf in the Heart of

Your, &c. &c.

LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

To ARISTUS.

I Have ſpent the laſt Week, ARISTUS, in the higheſt Luxury a human Soul is capable of receiving. I need not explain what that Luxury was, when I inform you that I have been with that truly great Man AGATHOCLES at his delightful Seat in the Country; whoſe Accompliſhments and refined Humanity ennoble him infinitely more than that high Rank he inherits from a Race of unſullied Anceſtors. Tho' AGATHOCLES was born to the firſt Honours a Subject can enjoy, ſupported by a Fortune few under Princes poſſeſs, he neither does, nor has occaſion to value himſelf upon either, any farther than they empower him to gratify that moſt exquiſite of all Senſations, which the glowing Heart receives in relieving our Fellow-Creatures. Did the Great con-

ſider that they might deſcend, like the Dew of Heaven, to cheriſh deſponding Merit, to comfort the Afflicted, to protect and redreſs the Injured, and to ſupport with chearful Suſtenance the helpleſs Poor, ſurely this Imitation of the moſt amiable Attribute belonging to the ALMIGHTY, is more worthy of their Ambition than all the mighty Titles the fawning Eaſt beſtows on it's haughty Monarchs. The moſt glorious Character in all the *Mahometan* Hiſtory is that of OMAR, the ninth Caliph of the Race of MERWAN. His Life was one continued Act of Charity and Benevolence; a happy Prelude of his Reign was ſeen at his Coronation, for Hiſtory tells us that he gave from off his Back, as ſoon as the Ceremony of the Inauguration was over, his Imperial Robe adorned with Jewels of an immenſe Value, even as he was deſcending down the Steps from the Throne, as an Alms to be diſtributed among the Indigent. O ARISTUS, I more envy

OMAR

OMAR this humane Sacrifice of Grandeur to Benevolence, (for the Action may be conſidered thus emblematically) than the dazzling Splendor of all the Lords of the vaſt OTTOMAN Empire!—— But to return to AGATHOCLES. Whilſt I was at his Caſtle, which, like the Queen of the Country, overlooks the Subject Vales around it, I thought myſelf from the lofty Situation of the Place, and the uncommon Goodneſs that perpetually reigned there, under the Protection of a Being of a ſuperior Order; or not unlike to our firſt Parent, as deſcribed by MILTON, on the Top of a high Mountain, receiving Inſtruction from the Angel MICHAEL: and indeed often having entertained my Senſes with the moſt deſireable Productions of Art and Science, and my Heart with the Contemplation of Goodneſs, I could not refrain from burſting out into poor ADAM's Exclamation,

" How ſhall I part, and whither wander down
" Into a lower World; to this obſcure,
" And wild? how ſhall I breathe in other Air
" Leſs pure, accuſtom'd to immortal Fruits?

Parad. Loſt, Book the xi.

tho'

Tho' the Taſte of this great Man is truly noble and refined in imparadiſing (if I may uſe the Word) the Region round him; in the Collection of his Pictures; in the Oeconomy of his Family; and the Choice of his Pleaſures; a Taſte for a ſuperior Accompliſhment, I mean that *Grace* of Charity with which he accompanies every Word or Act of Benevolence, attracts the more particular Regard of Mankind, yet leaves them in Suſpence to decide which is moſt lovely, the Deed of Goodneſs, or the manner of performing it. Without this happy Talent, Munificence ſtabs a Dagger into the Breaſt of thoſe ſhe intends to relieve, with one Hand, while ſhe extends the Purſe with the other. This will be fully exemplified in the following ſhort Story. PANDOLFO MALATESTA the Sovereign of REMINI, in the time of Pope ALEXANDER VIth, was the richeſt Prince in ITALY, who, after having ſpent a deſpicable Life in the arms of Luxury, was reduced, by a merited

rited reverſe of Fortune, to ſeek for an Aſylum at laſt in a common Hoſpital at BOLOGNA. The Account goes, that this Tyrant, for ſuch he was, being expelled from his Dominions, and perſecuted by his Enemies, in pain and want fled to the above-mentioned City, where at that very Time dwelt a Nobleman named PIETRO DEL SACCIO, a Native of REMINI, who ſome few Years before had been driven from his Country by the Tyranny of MALATESTA, who unjuſtly ſeized upon all his Poſſeſſions in that Principality, and put many of his Family to the Sword. When word was brought to this Nobleman, that the late Uſurper was now in his Power, and that he might revenge thoſe Injuries by delivering him up to CÆSAR BORGIA, or by killing him with his own Hand, the exaſperated *Italian* with ingenious Malice replied, " Yes, I will now fully revenge " the Injuries I have ſuſtained; I will do " more than kill PANDOLFO, for I " will

" will order him to be carried to the " Hoſpital I endowed myſelf, and let the " Tyrant know that the wretched Means " of protracting a miſerable Being, is " owing to the Bounty of PIETRO DEL " SACCIO."——Such Cruelty will always attend ill-conducted Bounty, however otherwiſe intended! yet methinks Nature leads us ſo ſtrongly to adminiſter every Application of Humanity, with that *lenient* Hand ſo requiſite to make even Relief acceptable to an ingenuous Mind, that I wonder a proper manner does not always accompany a charitable Action; nay farther, I am inclinable to think, where it does not, the Deed cannot proceed from a tender Sympathy of a Fellow-Creature's Diſtreſs, but from an Oſtentation of ſuperfluous Poſſeſſions. Of all Taſte may Heaven beſtow on me chiefly this! that when I rock the Cradle of the Orphan, or wipe the guſhing Tear from the Eyes of the Widow, I may adminiſter both in ſo ſilent a manner, that neither they ſhould feel the Pain of receiving, nor the tainting

Breath

Breath of the World's Promulgation disturb the quiet Purpose of my Heart, brooding over it's unspeakable Transport in sacred Secrecy! My Love to LEONORA, to whom I ought to add something in answer to her last Letter; but Ideas of Compassion are now work'd up so strongly in my Mind, and those *Dew-drops of Tenderness*, as she called them (when I wept over the little Foundling nurs'd at a neighbouring Cottage) rise so plentifully that I must abruptly subscribe myself

Your, &c. &c.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

To Critophilus.

I Very readily concur in your Opinion, Critophilus, that a Work of Criticiſm is the moſt difficult to be executed with a proper Taſte of any literary Compoſition whatever. There is ſomething ſo repugnant to the Pride of Mankind in general, ſomething ſo detractive from the ſuppoſed Sagacity of every Reader, to pretend to inform by the dry Method of Precept, that except an Author has all the Delicacy and artful Addreſs imaginable, to ſeem to *accompany* the Judgments of of thoſe he writes for, rather than to *lead* them into Diſcoveries, in ſuch a Performance, he will meet with that kind of contemptuous Treatment, which thoſe good-natured People receive, who are ready to give their unaſk'd Advice in the common Concerns of Life upon every Occaſion. It is highly neceſſary therefore,

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in ſuch kind of Writings, *to ſacrifice liberally to the* GRACES, without whoſe Inſpiration Learning will there degenerate into Pedantry, and the Precepts even of Wiſdom paſs unreliſhed. An Author of a didactic Piece cannot be too circumſpect, not only in the pleaſing manner of addreſſing his Reader, but in the inferior Parts too of Compoſition, that the Choice of his Words, and the Arrangement of his Periods, may adorn, and not degrade the Delicacy of his Subject. For want of this Refinement we have many lamentable Inſtances of able Scholars having ſucceeded very ill in Works, where they have betrayed the greateſt want of Taſte and Genius, whilſt they were unfortunately laborious in endeavouring to point out thoſe Excellencies in others. I need go no farther for a Proof of this than Mr. ANTHONY BLACKWALL'S † *Introduction to the Claſſics.*

† He was a Schoolmaſter at *Derby*. His Book was publiſhed in 1718.

Claſſics. This Man was what is generally called a good Scholar, that is, he was gramatically Maſter of the two dead Languages *Greek* and *Latin*, and had *read over* all the ancient Authors in both; but not having by Nature or Acquiſition that happy Taſte of diſtinguiſhing Beauties, nor a Digeſtion (if I may ſo ſay) to aſſimilate the Senſe of others into his own Underſtanding, his Conceptions were as crude as his Addreſs and Stile were unpleaſing. I remember the good old Schoolmaſter, for ſuch he was, in one place informs us, ſpeaking of HERODOTUS and LIVY, that "theſe two Princes of *Greek* "and *Roman* Hiſtory, *tell a Story*, and "*make up* a Deſcription with inexpreſſible "Grace; and ſo delicately *mix great* and "*little* Circumſtances, that there is both "the utmoſt Dignity and Pleaſure in "it"‡. I leave you to animadvert on the Groſſneſs of theſe Metaphors, and paſs on to

‡ Indrod. to the Claſ. p. 26.

to a Specimen both of wretched Writing, and undiſtinguiſhing Taſte. Having ſpoke much about the inſufficiency of modern Tranſlators, to give us the Senſe of ancient Authors, he goes on thus: " Beſides the " weakening of the Senſe (tho' that be " far the moſt important Conſideration) " *Greek* and *Latin* have ſuch a noble " *Harmony of Sound*, ſuch Force and Dig- " nity of Numbers, and ſuch Delicacy of " turn in the Periods, that cannot entirely " be preſerved in any Language in the " World. The *two Languages are ſo* " *peculiarly ſuſceptive* of all the Graces " of Wit and Elocution, that they are " read with more Pleaſure and lively " Guſt, and conſequently with more " Advantage, than the moſt perfect Tran- " ſlation the ableſt Genius can compoſe, " or the ſtrongeſt modern Language can " bear" *. Now beſides the aukward Diction, and unharmonious Cloſe of the

K Period,

* Ibid. p. 57.

Period, (two Faults he reaſonably might be expected to avoid, when the juſtly admired Ancients were ſo ſtrongly in his Mind) he has huddled together his undiſtinguiſhed Commendations of the *Greek* and *Latin*, and ſo unjuſtly given the Preference of the latter to our own copious Language, with that trite profound air of ridiculous Erudition, as muſt unavoidably have thoſe Effects upon his different Readers, which Mr. POPE deſcribes in his incomparable *Eſſay on Criticiſm*,

" Such labour'd nothings in ſo grave a Stile,
" Amaze th' unlearn'd, and make the learned ſmile."

But let the Peace of Dulneſs brood over ſuch Lumber, and let us turn our Eyes to a more delightful Object, the revival of the true Spirit of ancient Criticiſm in the Works of ſome illuſtrious modern Geniuſes, who tread in the Steps of their ador'd Maſters as far as they went, and then penetrate deeper into the Laurel Grove of Science than any of their Predeceſſors ever

ever ventur'd. The firſt I ſhall mention is the great Author † of *Reflections Critiques ſur la Peinture et la Poeſie*; a Work, which, in the Hands of an ordinary Writer, would have been an unentertaining String of dry Reflections upon thoſe Arts only, but under the Magic of his maſterly Pen, comprehends the moſt judicious Obſervations upon every Idea of the human Mind, in each ſimple and complicated Appearance. The next is the ingenious Author of the *Enquiry into the Life and Writings of* HOMER ‡, in which he has clearly demonſtrated by irrefragable Reaſons, drawn from a Conjunction of moral and natural Cauſes, that ſuch a Poet never could ariſe ſince him in the ſpace of two thouſand ſeven hundred Years, for want of that happy Concurrence of Circumſtances, without which even this immortal Genius himſelf

† Monſr. l'Abbé du Bos.

‡ Mr. Bl——— a Scotch Gentleman, who labours under the misfortune to have a ſimilar Name to the Schoolmaſter above-cited.

ſelf might have been in an inferior Rank of the Muſes Train. The lateſt that has improved our Taſte and enriched our Language, is the elegant Writer * of thoſe *inſtructive Notes*, and entertaining *Commentary on* HORACE's two critical Epiſtles, the one to the PISOS, commonly called the *Art of Poetry*, the other to AUGUSTUS; to the latter of which is ſubjoined a *Diſcourſe on Poetical Imitation*, wherein he has nobly defended the Cauſe of congenial Fancies in all Ages, againſt the ill-grounded Clamor of popular Ignorance and Envy, with the deep Spirit of Philoſophy, and the warm Zeal of a Lover.——We find in the Works of theſe great Men, a pleaſing Power of rendering every Subject intereſting to the human Heart, by bringing home to our Breaſts Objects ſeemingly the moſt remote, and uniting a Train of captivating Circumſtances, ariſing naturally out of their Plans, which animates all their Writings,

* Mr. H——d of Emanuel College, Cambridge.

Writings, not unlike the amiable Group of Figures in one of POUSSIN's Landſcapes, which gives a ſilent Leſſon of Morality unawares to the Beholder, who no more than the Shepherds in the Picture, § imagin'd to find, in that *Arcadian* Scene, any thing but ſhady Groves, clear Fountains, verdant Meadows, and other com-

§ The Picture here hinted at is deſcrib'd by the ingenious ABBE DU BOS above-mention'd, which I will give the Reader in his own Words. After having obſerv'd that it was a Landſcape in ancient ARCADIA, he continues; " Le tableau dont je parle répréſente le payſage " d'une contreé riante. Au milieu l'on voit le monument " d'une jeune fille morte a la fleur de ſon age: c'eſt ce " qu' on connoit par la Statue de cette fille coucheé ſur " le tombeau a la maniere des anciens. L' inſcription " Sepulchrale n'eſt que quartre mots latins: Je vivois ce- " pendant in Arcadie, *et in Arcadia* ego. Mais cette in- " ſcription ſi courte fait faire les plus ſerieuſes reflections " a deux jeunes garçons et a deux jeunes filles parées de " guirlandes de fleurs, et qui paroiſſent avoir rencontré " ce monument ſi triſte en des lieux où l'on devine bien " qu' ils ne cherchoient pas un objet affligeant. Un d' " entre eux fait remarquer aux autres cette inſcription en " la montrant du doigt, et l' on ne voit plus ſur leur vi- " ſage, a travers l' affliction qui s'en empare, que les " reſtes d'une joye expirante. On s' imagine entendre les " reflections de ces jeunes perſonnes ſur la mort qui n' e- " pargne in l' age ni la beauté, et contre laquelle les " plus heureux climats n' ont point d' azile. On ſe fi- " gure ce qu' elles vont ſe dire de touchant lorſqu' elles " ſeront revenues de la premiere ſurpriſe, et l' on l'ap- " plique à ſoi-même et a ceux pour qui l'on s'intereſſe.

Reſl. Crit. Sect. VI.

mon Assemblages of a rural Prospect.—I am much oblig'd to you for your ingenious Observations upon that ancient Sepulchral Inscription I lately sent you; nor would I have you asham'd if hereafter it should prove the ingenious Imitation of some Modern, for you know the great SCALIGER himself was impos'd upon in this manner by MUPET, which was acknowledg'd by all the Learned to be a greater Proof of the Abilities of the latter, than of the want of any critical Acumen in the former. I shall expect to meet you at the Grand Emporium very soon, therefore shall add no more than that I am

Your, &c. &c.

LETTER XX.

To EUPHEMIUS.

JOY to the World, EUPHEMIUS, that a freſh Spring of almoſt inexhauſtible Pleaſure is open'd, now that mythological Veil is taken away which envelop'd the Wiſdom of the Ancients. But I little thought, when I ſent you the ingenious Profeſſor's Book ‡, that I ſhould embarraſs myſelf in a cruel Alternative, either of denying a Requeſt of your's on one hand, or of expoſing my want of Abilities to you in attempting to comply with it on the other. The Reaſon you aſſign for deſiring me to draw out a *Mythological Genealogy* of TASTE, in the manner of

‡ *Letters concerning Mythology* (written by the Author of *the Enquiry into the Life and Writings of* HOMER) to which Work, in Compariſon of the other, we may apply thoſe Words of TULLY, Non eſt enim, ut in arce poni poſſit, quaſi illa Minerva Phidiæ: ſed tamen, ut ex eâdem officinâ exiſſe appareat.

Introd. ad. Parad.

the Ancients, would hold good that I ſhould turn the Tables upon you, and leave the Taſk in far abler Hands: for the ingenious Obſervations you made, whilſt we were reading over together the four firſt Books of DIODORUS SICULUS, convince me I ſhould ſpend my Time more uſefully in reading an entertaining Fable of yours on this Subject, than in attempting to compoſe one myſelf. But as the Friendſhip ſubſiſting betwixt us demands that I ſhould run the hazard of giving you a diſadvantageous Opinion of my Capacity, rather than of my Inclination to ſatisfy your Deſire, I will endeavour to recall ſome Idea of that Philoſophical Spirit which diſcovers itſelf in all your Reflections upon the Compoſitions of the Ancients, and entertain you, as Dependents upon Great Men do their Patrons, with a Banquet of your own providing.

In a Cave of a Mountain in the Iſland of CRETE dwelt a Nymph called CONTEMPLATION, ſprung, as the *Mythologiſts* re-

port, from JUPITER, the greateſt of the Gods; for, according to their Accounts, ſhe was conceiv'd and leapt forth from the Brain of her Cœleſtial Parent, as PALLAS did, whilſt he was deeply attentive in beholding the Beauties of the Creation. In this ſacred Retirement the Nymph had liv'd many Ages, whither ſeveral ancient Poets, Heroes, Philoſophers, and Legiſlators frequently reſorted, for no one ever left her without receiving the utmoſt Happineſs from her divine Precepts. As APOLLO was wandering one Day over the Top of this Mountain, he chanc'd to light upon this heavenly Maid, whilſt ſhe was buſied in her uſual Employment of meditating on this ſtupendous Syſtem, and the divine Perfections of the great Creator of the World. Smit with her Charms, he immediately deſcended into the Cave, and having enjoy'd her, ſhe bore him a Son, whom the God nam'd EUDOXUS, alluding to the noble Ideas which fill'd the Mother's Mind when he firſt beheld her. 'Tis

ſaid,

ſaid, as the Nymph CONTEMPLATION was one Night counting the Stars, and deſcribing on the Sand with a Wand their different Situations and Motions, having left the Child not far off on a Bed of Violets, that the Nightingale came and cover'd him with Laurel Leaves, and lull'd him to Sleep with the Melody of her Song, ſoftly modulated to the tender Ear of the liſt'ning Infant. About this Time the DELPHIAN ORACLE declar'd that a Ray of Light was deſcended from the SUN, and being diſcerp'd from that mighty Luminary ſhould be ſpread all over GREECE, ITALY, and part of ASIA-MINOR, for many Ages. When EUDOXUS had paſs'd the Years of Childhood, APOLLO being deſirous not only to inſtruct him in the abſtruſer Knowledge of his Mother, but to unite in his Education a thorough Reliſh of ſuch other Arts and Sciences, as might render him a Benefactor to Mankind in general, and his favourite Nation the GREEKS in particular, he took the Boy to his own belov'd Seat

of

of Retirement, and committed his Darling Charge to the Care of the NINE MUSES, and their Sisters the Heavenly GRACES. Here EUDOXUS was instructed, first how the Great ARCHITECT of the Creation divided the warring Elements, and out of CHAOS form'd by his Plastic Mandate the unmeasurable Frame of this stupendous Universe. Next, how the refulgent Source of Light and Heat, the Sun, sprung thro' the blue Serene of Heaven, and being fix'd immoveable in the Center of all, drew round his glorious Orb those inferior Globes, whose certain and unerring Courses, in unchangeable Periods of Time, form that ætherial Harmony imperceptible to all Beings but the Inhabitants of Heaven. Then he was told how the oblique Position of this our Earth in its annual Progress caus'd the delightful Revolutions of Seasons; how the soft descending Rains and genial Warmth of Spring, open'd the relenting Earth, call'd forth the infant Buds, and afterwards unfolded all the vegetable Pride of Flowers

and

and Bloſſoms; how the more perpendicular Rays of Heat ripened the riſing Harveſt in Summer; how Autumn glories in the regal Hue of it's purple Vintage; and laſtly, how the ſterile Winter itſelf was as uſeful to Mortals as the other teeming Seaſons, by affording in its cold Embraces the requiſite Reſt to the ſleeping Vegetables, which thereby gain freſh Vigour to renew their Species, and to perpetuate Suſtenance to all Animals, in the ſame Rotation, till Time ſhall be no more. From this general Knowledge of Nature, he was led to enquire into the Conſtruction of particular Parts, the Bodies of Animals, and eſpecially thoſe of the human Race; to diſcover the Cauſes of Pain and Diſeaſe, and by what Methods to reſtore them to their priſtine Beauty and internal Harmony called Health, and to recall the natural original Senſations of Eaſe and Pleaſure. When the DAUGHTERS *of* MEMORY had fully inſtructed EUDOXUS, as APOLLO had directed them, in every Branch of this Knowledge, they brought

him

him by degrees to conceive that an æthe-rial Spirit was for a while united with the human Body; how it was agitated by different Paſſions whilſt in this Conjunction; and then after Solution, the Body ſhould return to it's kindred Duſt, out of which it was form'd, and the Soul to a ſeparate State of Happineſs or Miſery, according as it acted in this probationary State on Earth. Having taken this View of Man in the Abſtract with all his Wants and Infirmities, the MUSES, laſt of all, gave their Diſciple a thorough Inſight into the human Race in Society, where, by the Goodneſs of the firſt Author of all Things, theſe very Deficiencies of Individuals united the whole Species, and the mutual Supply of each others Wants link'd all Degrees into one irrefragable Chain together, each different Part of which reciprocally depended upon the other, from the Beginning to the End. They taught him too, by way of Amuſement, the uſe and power of Muſic, Painting, and Poetry, the firſt of which could aſſwage mental

Agony;

Agony; the ſecond revive paſt Pleaſures in beholding beautiful Objects; and the third inſpire with a true love of Virtue, by perpetuating the rever'd Memory of thoſe who had been Ornaments to our Species. EUDOXUS, being at length quite accompliſhed in every Art and Science, became enamoured of one of the GRACES, who returned his Paſſion with mutual Ardor. One Day they took an Opportunity, whilſt the other two were buſied in ſporting with FLORA and her train of ZEPHYRS, to gratify their Deſires in a Cave of Mount IDA. The Offspring of their Embraces was a Daughter, whom the fond Parents named CALOCAGATHIA. This Nymph, who inherited all the Knowledge of her Father, and all the *Charms* of her Mother, became as ſhe grew up the chief Favorite both of Gods and Men. In the cœleſtial Banquets ſhe always ſat next to VENUS, and on Earth had the Honour attributed to her of inſpiring whatever was uncommonly beautiful in Morals, Arts, and Sciences.

In

In this manner, my dear EUPHEMIUS, the ancient Mythologiſts would have drawn the Genealogy of TASTE, making her the Daughter of one of the GRACES begot by KNOWLEDGE, who was the Son of CONTEMPLATION. The Truth of this figurative Repreſentation you may eaſily prove, by comparing it with the Hiſtory of your own Mind, where you can trace the Goddeſs from her Birth, to the full Charms of her ripeſt Age. Adieu, my Friend, and may ſhe ſtill attend you thro' Life in every Purſuit, whether in Arts, Sciences, Morals or Religion. I am

Your, &c. &c.

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